THE ORACLES OF REASON:

Conſiſting of

1. A Vindication of Dr. *Burnet's Archeologiæ.*
2. The Seventh and Eighth Chapters of the ſame.
3. Of *Moſes's* Deſcription of the Original ſtate of Man, *&c.*
4. Dr. *Burnet's* Appendix of the *Brachmins* Religion.
5. An Account of the *Deiſt's* Religion.
6. Of the Immortality of the Soul
7. Concerning the *Arrians*, *Trinitarians* and Councils.
8. That Felicity conſiſts in Pleaſure.
9. Of Fate and Fortune.
10. Of the Original of the *Jews*.
11. The Lawfulneſs of Marrying two Siſters Succeſſively.
12. A Political Account of the Subverſion of *Jewdaiſm*, and Original of the *Millenium*.
13. Of the Auguries of the Ancients.
14. Natural Religion as oppos'd to divine Revelation.
15. That the Soul is Matter.
16. That the World is Eternal, *&c.*

In ſeveral Letters to Mr. *Hobbs* and other Perſons of Eminent Quality, and Learning.

By *Clar. Blount* Eſq; Mr. *Gildon* and Others.

LONDON, Printed 1693.

203.04

THE PREFACE.

NAture, or that Sacred and Supream CAUSE of all Things, which we term GOD, has furnished his Creatures with such Guides, as may best Conduct them to the several Ends of their Beings. To the Birds, Beasts and other Animals, which we generally hold Inferior to Mankind, he gave INSTINCT, as sufficient to direct them to all that is necessary for them. We may well therefore excuse them, if by that Guide they go not beyond a present Care of their Subsistence and Continuation, all which reaches not beyond the Body; because we can discover no other End of their Being (except what human Luxury has found out in their Destruction) but to Support that Being by Food, and to Preserve it by Propagations

pagation; and to this, Inſtinct *is ſufficient.*

But in Man we (at leaſt) diſcover a farther and nobler End. Nature therefore muſt have given him another and a more ſufficient Guide: For the Mind of Man (the Chief Ingredient of his Compoſition) is not bounded by preſent Objects, in which Inſtinct *alone would ſerve. Futurity has always a ſhare in its Thoughts, and its Faculties will be employ'd with a Care of thoſe Things that are to come, from whence it may derive not only Advantage, Intereſt and Eaſe for the Body, but alſo Improvement, Happineſs and Tranquility for its ſelf.*

But the things from which the Mind muſt gather, and of which Compoſe all theſe, are ſo vaſt in Number, and ſo Various and Obſcure in their Natures, that without the Help of a very good Guide, it may make a Collection of Poiſons inſtead of Medicines, and reap its Deſtruction, not Satisfaction; But the Omnipotent CAUSE, *that had ſo well furniſhed Bruits, left not the Mind of Man without its Director in this Maze and Lottery of Things; he gave it*

Reaſon,

Reaſon, *as its ſovereign Rule and Touch-ſtone to examin them by, and to fit our Choice to our double Advantage of Body and Mind. Reaſon is the Light, that brings Day to thoſe Things, that will contribute to, or oppoſe our Happineſs; without which we ſhould in vain grope in the Dark; and we ſhould owe entirely to Chance what we obtain'd.*

'Tis true, Reaſon is not ſufficient to bring us to a perfect Knowledge of all Things, but 'tis able to furniſh us with enough to make us happy, and that is as much as we need care for. There is no neceſſity of our Skill in the inmoſt Nature of Things, but there is (ſince we are ordain'd to an eternity of Continuance) that we ſhould know how to make Eternity Happy, ſince its Being ſo depends on our ſelves; and ſince ſuch a Knowledge is abſolutely neceſſary, I can diſcover nothing that can give it us, but our ſovereign Guide, Reaſon.

REASON, *therefore being the Supream and Primitive Director of e'ery Man, to infringe its Liberty of directing, is to invade the common Charter of Nature, and every Man's Right and*

Property: ſo that thoſe that do ſo, are juſtly to be look'd on as the Enemies of Human-kind. But how that Character agrees with the Fiery *Glory of the* Zealots *for Religion, I cannot comprehend, unleſs they can demonſtrate, That Religion and Nature are directly Oppoſites.*

I am not ignorant that they pretend their Severity againſt Heterodox Books (that is, all that deviate from their Opinions) is the Effect of their Zeal for the Good of Mankind. But then they cannot deny but that they make themſelves *the Judges of that* God, *and ſo make their Opinion the Standard, which is too particular for what they would have of ſo univerſal Extent; and will afford us no Refuge if they ſhould lead us into an Error, which we may hereafter find (unleſs they deny that they can be deceived) and if they ſhould do ſo, then may their Univerſal imaginary Good prove a Real and Univerſal Evil.*

If they would have us believe, that they hold every Man muſt be ſaved by his own, not anothers Faith; they muſt grant

grant every one the Liberty of believing and profeſſing what his own Reaſon ſhall direct him; and that 'tis a Crime to oppoſe this Liberty, I mean by indirect Means, for I ſhall never quarrel at Reaſon if they can produce any. I muſt tell theſe Fiery *Bigots, that their Practice and Doctrin being ſo Contradictory, gives a more effectual Blow at Religion, than all the Attempts of profeſſed Atheiſts; for when theſe claſh, they give too great Grounds to ſuſpect a trick in the whole: And when ſo eſſential a Birthright of each Man is invaded, it muſt improve thoſe Suſpicions very much, and cauſe a narrower Enquiry into Things that might otherwiſe paſs unregarded.*

We ſhould not have ſo great cauſe to reſent this Severity, If we might ſay of Religion and Eternity, as Pliny *ſaid of Providence,* ---- Ridiculum eſt agere curam rerum humanarum, Quicquid eſt Summum, ſed credi uſui eſt Vitæ.--- *That 'twas meerly a political Trick for the Convenience of Government and human Life. Then indeed it would be ſomething pardonable in theſe Gentlemen,*

that Patronize the Fire *and* Faggot *ſo vehemently, to ſtrive with ſo much Ardor for the reducing all to their own Fancy. Then the Prophanation would not be great, of making what they really believ'd a Chymæra ſerve a Turn, and compliment a Faction or any Intereſt. I will eaſily excuſe the ancient Founders of Paganiſm, for having recourſe to Stratagems, to reduce Mens Reaſon to particular Opinions, becauſe they made uſe of them only to form Greatneſs to themſelves, by impoſing on the* Predominant *Frailties of the Vulgar Sort, in a thing they judg'd of no more Concern, than a temporal Convenience. 'Twas no ill Policy in them, when they perceiv'd the Generality of Mankind would eaſily ſubmit their Reaſon to every appearance of a Wonder, to fiſh for their* Profit *and Glory, with ſo eaſie a Bait.* Alexander *the falſe Prophet, mentioned by* Lucian, *found it turn to his Advantage, in gaining him ſo great an Intereſt in the People. And from this Topic* Philoſtrates *magnifies* Apollonius. *Theſe in ſhort, every new God and Prophet among them was to have, as Credentials of his Di-*

vinity

vinity, and a Right to the Zeal of his Devotees. Some of these carried, I must confess, extraordinary Circumstances to gain 'em necessary Credit, as one (among several others) in those Marble Records found in the Temple of Æsculapius *in* Rome, viz.

Αὐ ταῖς ταῖς ἡμέραις Γαίῳ, &c.

To this purpose in English.

In those days there was an Oracle delivered to one *Caius*, that was blind, that he should come to the Sacred Altar, and kneel down, and should then go from the right side to the left, and place five Fingers on the Altar, and lift up his Hand and put it on his own Eyes: Which done, he plainly saw in the presence of all the People, who congratulated the Cure, that such great Miracles should be performed under our Emperor *Antoninus*.

The Circumstances of this were very Remarkable, and there is nothing but the Blind Man himself that could carry on the Imposture, in pretending a Cure

of a Disease he did not labour with, and for the Glory of their Gods the Romans *always found some that would attest the highest Improbabilities by Authority, to influence the People with an Awe; as he that Swore he saw* Romulus *assum'd into Heaven, in that* Senate, *that had been the Authors of his Death, but they were willing to grant him Immortality and Deity above, to be rid of him there, and at the same time give the People a Veneration for their Princes, when they saw they passed from governing them to be Gods.*

But to return from this Digression, I could pardon these Heathens, because they had no Opinion of the Sacredness of what they imposed, and besides fear'd to trust Mankind with their Reason, least they should discover the Imposture. But among Christians, whose Opinions in Matters of Religion, ought to be Sacred, and beyond the Fear of the nicest Scrutiny of Reason, to confine our Liberty of Judging is too Arbitrary for Englishmen to bear. If these Gentlemen, with the Heathens, think this Method for their turn, I cant blame 'em; but if with us they

they believe Religion and Eternity a sacred Truth, and that every Man is so far interested in them, that his Enjoyment and loss of Eternal Happiness depends on his own Faith; let them leave every Man in his Native Right to Reason on what Concerns him so much, and bring nothing against us but what Reason *affords them. For 'tis but fair that if I must venture my Life in any Cause, I have the Liberty of taking my own Methods of Security.*

This Liberty among us extends to the interpreting that sacred Repository of Truth, the Holy Scriptures, according to our own Reason; which is a Liberty that has been for many Years asserted to be the Right of every reasonable Man: This being granted, as indeed it can't be deny'd, it inevitably follows, that we ought to be allow'd a Liberty of Declaring our Opinion and Interpretation, or else it could be of no use in Nature to us. And if this be the Right of every reasonable Man, how much more must it be of Men that to their natural Reason have the acquired helps of Learning, as Dr. Burnet *must be granted to have,*

whom

whom my ever Honoured and Learned Friend has ſo well, and with ſo much Evidence, vindicated in the firſt Letter of this Book. Nor is it through a vain Opinion that I can add any force to that incomparable Defence of his learned Advocate, that I preſume to intereſt my ſelf in the Doctor's Quarrel; but only to plead for that Liberty for him (and in him for every ingenious Man) which his great Oppoſers ſtand ſo much upon, againſt thoſe Adverſaries that would deny the ſame to them. I ſhould never complain of their confuting him by fair Reaſon, for that is the Weapon of Mankind; but when they have Recourſe to the wretched Refuge of rooted Argument, Power, *and the* ſay ſo *of ſuch and ſuch, we have cauſe to complain of unfair Dealing, and that they preſs what they would not admit themſelves.*

Let Reaſon *be our Judge, and we can never fear being* Cenſur'd *by* it, *for eſtabliſhing its Sovereignty: Nor can the niceſt Devotee that hath any deference to Reaſon deny, but that Dr.* Burnet *has diſcover'd more Veneration for the great Prophet* Moſes, *by reducing him to that noble Standard, and freeing him from all the*

the Abſurdities vulgar Apprehenſions had caſt on him, than thoſe who ſickle them, that involv'd him in 'em. In ſhort, 'tis not Moſes *but his Interpreters that the learned Doctor has expoſed, and by conſequence 'tis not that holy Law-giver, but the blind Biggots of the old abſurd Interpretation of him, that we have offended in publiſhing this in* Engliſh.

Let our Adverſaries but conſider that this Liberty I have been pleading for, and which the Doctor has made uſe of, is only to examin the Interpretation of Others, by the ſevere, yet juſt, Rules of Reaſon; which they will agree to be very reaſonable, when they ſhall reflect, that the Paſſions and Intereſts of Men have not only emboldned them to miſinterpret the Sacred Writ *to their own Ends, but alſo to add to and detract from the very Text it ſelf.*

Thus they have brought into Queſtion ſeveral parts of the new Teſtament, and among others particularly the Epiſtle to the Hebrews, *which in ſome Manuſcripts is left out, and even in that of* Beza, *which is very ancient, 'tis put by its ſelf at the End, like an Apocriphal piece.*

St.

St. Jerom *is a further Testimony of this, who having the Supervisal and Correction of the* Latin *Bible, assures us, that having recourse to the* Greek, *he found those Copies as defective, and as much alter'd by the Transcribers as those of the* Latins.

This liberty of Reasoning I have been so long pleading for, our severest Oponents will grant us in Philosophical and Historical Points, of which that part of this Book which relates not to Religion, is compos'd: I shall therefore say nothing in defence of them, nor obviate those Objections I foresee will be made against them by those, that do not consider, that we judg of things of that nature but by bare Appearances, and Probabilities. 'Twill be time enough to defend them when they are attackt. Nor shall I meddle with any other of the Letters that relate to Religion except one, the subject of which is so uncommon, the Reasons it contains so extraordinary, and the End it aims at so evidently gain'd, that I cannot but take notice of it. Not that I can be so vain to imagin, that my declaring my self of that opinion, will be any Advantage to

the

the cauſe, or that what I can ſay, will in the leaſt ſtrengthen my Honour'd Friends Arguments, which of themſelves are invincible, but I conſult purely my own ſatisfaction in running over ſome Particulars of the Subject of it; which tho I am not vain enough to think, yet am I zealous enough to wiſh ſerviceable to the Honourable Perſon the Letter is directed to. I mean that about the Lawfulneſs of Marrying two Siſters.

All the weight and force of the Arguments of this Subject ſeem to turn upon this one Point, viz. Whether the Marriage of two Siſters ſucceſſively be againſt the Laws of God. *This is the Rock that all the Defenders of the Affirmative depend on, and this they fix chiefly on* Levit. 18. 16, & 18. *or ſome other* Moſaic *Prohibitions. So that if it be made evident that ſuch a Marriage is not forbidden by the Law of God, the* Bugbears *of Cuſtom (for thoſe of the Laws of the Land as well as the Canon-Law evidently, from the proof of my ever Honour'd and Learned Friend, depend entirely on this) will vaniſh; for if the Law of God be not infring'd, I think there*

is

is no other consideration can reach the niceſt ſcruple of the moſt ſevere Lady of Honour that has with it Senſe and Reaſon, as I am aſſur'd the Admirable Aſtræa has. Tho this Point as well as the reſt be already beyond contradiction clear'd, yet I ſhall venture to attempt a Supererogatory Argument or two, as a tribute I owe to the truth, I ſo much approve of.

Firſt then to make any Law the Law of God, ſtrictly taken (for in ſome ſenſe every Law that tends to the temporary convenience or good of a people is ſo) it muſt have one quality, that is inſeparable from the Nature of God, and (by conſequence) of his Acts, viz. Immutability, *that is it muſt be founded in nature, and always the ſame. So that what was the Law of God in the time of* Abraham, *could not ceaſe to be ſo, or at leaſt be oppoſite to his Law, in our time; and what God plainly and openly eſpous'd in the time of* Abraham, *cannot but be ſuppos'd to be according to his Law: Now 'tis evident from the Sacred Scriptures, that* Sarah Abrahams *Wife was his Siſter, by the Father, tho not by the Mother,* Gen.

20.

20. 12. And yet indeed she is my Sister, she is the Daughter of my Father, but not the Daughter of my Mother, and she became my Wife.

Here was at least a half-blood, and something with a face very like Incest, and yet the Marriage justify'd by God himself, not only in the threats he us'd to Abimelech, *if he return'd not his Wife, and those Plagues he inflicted on* Pharoah *and his House,* Gen. 12. 17. And the Lord Plagued *Pharoah* and his House, with great Plagues because of *Sarai Abraham's* Wife: *But also in the farther confirmation of it,* Gen. 17. 15, & 16. And God said unto *Abraham*, as for *Sarai* thy Wife thou shalt not call her Name *Sarai*, but *Sarah* shall her Name be. *Now this alteration of her Name shew'd a particular favour she had found in being* Abraham's *lawful Wife, for God always alter'd or order'd the Names of those he particularly chose, as* Abraham's, Jacob's, &c. *And* ver. 16. *is a confirmation of my assertion,* I will bless her, and give thee a Son also of her, and *She* shall be a Mother of Nations, Kings of People shall be of her.

Certainly

Certainly never was Marriage better conſtitu'd than this, ſo ſolemnly approv'd by the God of Heaven, the God of Right *and* Juſt. *And afterward God chooſes to eſtabliſh his* Covenant *with* Iſaac *the Son of* Sarah, *not with* Iſhmael *the Son of* Hagar, tho *Hagar* was not his Siſter.

Yet we find this very ſort of Marriage ſo approv'd of by God in Geneſis, *forbid by* Moſes *in* Leviticus(*that is if we will believe theſe Gentlemen, that perſwade us that he intended the prohibitions of the* 18*th. of* Levit. *as to Marriage*) *for if,* Thou ſhalt not uncover the Nakedneſs of thy Fathers Daughter, *be the ſame as,* Thou ſhalt not marry thy Fathers Daughter, *and this be a Divine immutable Law, and by conſequence ſo from the beginning, the very Caſe of* Abraham *is expreſly condemn'd. Nay if this* Levitical *Prohibition be in this ſenſe, and the Law of God too, then wou'd there be a Divine Law expreſly contradictory to the Will of God himſelf. Such abſurdities do ſome men incur, whilſt they purſue either ſome private deſign, or ſupinely interpret without a diligent and*

through

through compariſon of the ſeveral Texts of Scripture.

But before I proceed 'twill not be amiſs in a line or two to ſhew that this Standard I make of the Law of God, is not my own particular Fancy, but a Reality eſtabliſh'd by Chriſt himſelf. For he examining ſome of the Levitical *Law, tells the* Jews *this was permitted for the hardneſs of your Hearts, but from the beginning it was not ſo, where he makes from the beginning the Teſt and Standard of that permiſſory Law, which muſt hold good too for the Prohibitions, both proceeding from the ſame cauſe,* viz. *the hardneſs of the* Iſraelites *hearts, or the depravity of their inclinations.*

But after all 'tis evident to me that there is no Prohibition of Marriage intended by that 18. Chap. of Leviticus, *for I meet not with the Phraſe of* Uncovering the Nakedneſs, *importing Marriage, in any part of Scripture, I mean abſolutely and alone; and 'tis evident from the* 20. Chap. *where the ſame Prohibitions are repeated, that they are meant barely as to unlawful Copulations without Marriage; for firſt to what purpoſe wou'd*

it

it be to forbid what never was done, or cou'd indeed be ſuppos'd to be tolerated ev'n among the Jews. *For we never read of any Daughters that Married their Fathers, or Sons their Mothers knowingly; there was ſuch a horror of this printed in the heart of man, that the very Heathens gave a puniſhment to* Oedipus *for the involuntary commiſſion of it; and* Periander *kill'd his Mother for ſtealing his Embraces. Next there is not one Verſe in the whole Chapter except the* 18th. *that has any relation to Marriage, and that indeed expreſſes the taking to Wife; which evinces the truth of what I aſſert,* viz. *that* Uncovering the Nakedneſs, *is not a Synonymous Expreſſion for Marrying; elſe 'twould be perfect Nonſenſe in this* 18th. *Verſe, which runs thus,* Neither ſhalt thou take a Wife to her Siſter, to vex her, to uncover her Nakedneſs beſides the other in her lifetime. *Now if theſe Expreſſions were Synonymous, it wou'd be thus,* Neither ſhalt thou take a Wife to her Siſter, to vex her, to take a Wife, &c. *Beſides it ſeems to imply a liberty of eſpouſing two Siſters at once, tho not of enjoying both, for uncovering*

covering the Nakedneſs is only an expreſſion for bare enjoyment, without regard either to Marriage or not.

If it be objected, that the Chapter ſhould be all of a piece, and that either this Verſe ſhould not relate to Marriage, or the reſt ſhou'd, I anſwer, there is no neceſſity of that, for in all the Chapters *in the Books of* Moſes, *where ſeveral Laws are repeated, he does not obſerve, at leaſt generally ſpeaking, any order or method in that, but mixes things of no relation to one another, as is evident from the very next* Chapter, *where almoſt every Verſe affords a new and different Prohibition. Beſides according to this the Verſes that follow the* 18th. *as well as thoſe that go before, muſt be of the ſame, which wou'd indeed be merry enough to make* Moſes *forbid our Marriage with Beaſts, or Mens Marrying one another, which perhaps might reach one of* Nero's *Extravagant Actions, but none elſe. But the* 20th. Chapter *explains this annexing each particular puniſhment, to each particular tranſgreſſion, whereas in this the puniſhment is put in general at the End, as* ver. 29. For whoſoever ſhall commit

commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among the People. *'Tis a common thing in the Prophet to repeat his Prohibitions, and sometimes with a little variety. But methinks* vers. 15. *of this* Chap. *shou'd put this beyond all question, where 'tis thus,* Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy Daughter in Law, for she is thy Sons Wife, &c. *The Verb* Is *being in the present Tense denotes the Son to be living.*

But for a concluding Proof that Marriage was not meant here, or that, if it was, not as an invariable Law of God, but only limited under such and such considerations, and by consequence only Temporary, and therefore wants that distinguishing mark given to the Divine Laws by Christ, let us compare vers. 16. *of this* 10*th.* Ch. *of* Levit. *with* Deut. 25. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, & 10. *First,* Lev. 1. 18, 16. Thou shalt not uncover the Nakedness of thy Brothers Wife, it is thy Brothers Nakedness. *Next,* Deut. 25. 5. If Brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no Child, the Wife of the Dead shall not marry without unto a stranger,

ger, her Husbands Brother ſhall go in unto her, and take her to him to Wife, and perform the *Duty* of a Husbands Brother to her. *Nay in the ſucceeding Verſes that is to the* 11th. *'tis prov'd ſo evident a* Duty, *that he who wou'd not comply with it was to be affected by publick Authority, with a publick Infamy. The firſt-born was only to ſucceed to the* Name *of the deceas'd Brother,* That his *Name* be not put out of Iſrael. *Now if Marrying the Brothers Wife were contrary to the Law of God, and by conſequence* Malum in ſe, *it cou'd not be deſpenſed with to ſerve a meer Political turn, and that ſo trivial as this, eſpecially ſince any other might perform it (if not a ſtranger, yet at leaſt ſome other of the Family not ſo nearly related) and the Child ſo begotten wou'd be as much the Child of the deceas'd, as if begot by his ſurviving Brother. Nay an Adoption might have kept up the Name, which ſeems to be the whole Aim of it, without diſpenſing with the Law of God on ſo ſmall and inconſiderable an Account.*

So that upon the whole, if (as I think is evident) the Marriage of a Brothers Widow

Widow be not forbid, the ubi eadem Ratio, ibi idem Jus *of the Canoniſts is quite out of Doors againſt the Marriage of two Siſters. And were I deceiv'd in my Aſſertions in this particular (which I do not believe) yet can I ſee no reaſon why this blind Prohibition of the old Law ſhould affect us any more than that of not wearing Garments of Linen and Woolen, ſince the former is no more confirm'd by Chriſt, than the latter, that is not at all. And great part of the* Levitical *Law was calculated for the* Iſraelites *in regard to their Rites, Cuſtoms and Inclinations, and are merely Political, which in their very nature can have no tye upon us.*

To conclude, if I have given the Scripture a contrary Interpretation to what it has receiv'd before, I can't help it; this I have choſen appears to me the natural reſult of the Words and Context, the other a plainly forc'd Expoſition.

C. GILDON.

The Readers are deſir'd to Correct the *Errata's* of the Preſs by their own ſenſe theſe Chance afford us, having no time to peruſe the whole. *Pag* 3. *l.*23. *add* the. *Pag.*179. *l.*2. *for* it *read* in. *Pag.*180. *l.*13. *for* and *read* co'd.

A

LETTER

To my Worthy Friend

Mr. GILDON

IN

VINDICATION

OF

Dr. Burnet.

SIR,

I Have, according to my Promiſe, ſent you herewith the Seventh and Eighth Chapters, as alſo the *Appendix*, of the Great and Learned Dr. *Burnet's* Book, *Archilogiæ Philoſophicæ*, publiſhed this Winter in *Latin*, and by him dedi-

cated to his Moſt Sacred Majeſty, and our Gracious Sovereign King *William*, being employ'd about other Things, I had not time to make the Tranſlation my ſelf, but transferr'd that Task upon —— yet dare anſwer for the Exactneſs of the Verſion. As for the Piece it ſelf, I think it one of the moſt Ingenious I ever read, and full of the moſt acute, as well as learned, Obſervations. Nor can I find any thing worthy an Objection againſt him, as ſome of the cenſorious part of the World pretend; who would have you believe it a meer Burleſque upon *Moſes*, and Deſtructive to the Notion of Original Sin, wherefore by conſequence (ſay they) there could be no neceſſity of a Redemption, which however I think no neceſſary Conſequence: But for my part, either the great Veneration I have for the Doctor's extraordinary Endowments, or elſe my own Ignorance has ſo far bribed me to his Intereſt, that I can by no means allow of any of thoſe Unjuſt Reflections the Whole-ſale Merchants of Credulity, as well as their unthinking Retailers, make againſt him. It is true, in the Seventh Chapter he ſeems to prove that many parts of the *Moſaic* Hiſtory of the Creation appear inconſiſtent with Reaſon; and in the Eighth Chapter the ſame appears no leſs inconſiſtent with Philoſophy; wherefore he concludes (as many Fathers of the Church have done before him) that the whole rather ſeems to have been but a pious Allegory, which

Moſes

Moſes was forced to accommodate to the weak Underſtandings of the Vulgar (who were uncapable of Philoſophy, or any higher Notions) thereby to imprint in them a true Sence of one Supream God, and of his Power, as alſo of the Original of the World, wherewith all other Lawgivers began their Hiſtories, as well as *Moſes*. But that the World had a beginning about Six thouſand Years ſince, as alſo the Degeneration of Mankind, our learned Author doth as ſtrenuouſly affirm, as 'tis poſſible.

Nor is Dr. *Burnet* the only ingenious Man either of this Age or Nation who has been, upon Enquiry, ſtartled at ſome Paſſages in the *Moſaic* Hiſtory: For Dr. *Brown* (ſo juſtly admired as well by Foreigners as his own Country-men, upon the Account of his Knowledge in all Gentile ſorts of Literature) does both in his *Religio Medici* and *Vulgar Errors*, betray his many Doubts and Scruples as well upon this Subject as others, in theſe very words —— 'I confeſs (ſays the Doctor) 'there are in Scripture Sto-'ries that do exceed the Fables of Poets, and 'to a captious Reader ſound like *Garagantua* or '*Bevis*. Search all the Legends of times paſt, 'and the fabulous Conceits of theſe preſent, and 'twill be hard to find one that deſerves to carry 'the Buckler unto little *Sampſon*; yet is all this 'of an eaſie poſſibility, if we conceive a divine 'Concourſe, or an influence from the little 'Finger of the Almighty. I am loth (ſays he)

'could ſhew a Catalogue of Doubts, never yet 'imagined nor queſtioned, as I know of, which 'are not reſolved in Scripture, at firſt hearing; 'not fantaſtic Quæries or Objections of Air: 'For I cannot hear of Atoms in Divinity. I 'can read the Hiſtory of the Pigeon that was 'ſent out of the Ark, and returned no more, 'yet not queſtion how ſhe found out her 'Mate that was left behind. That *Lazarus* 'was raiſed from the Dead, yet not demand 'where in the Interim his Soul waited; or raiſe 'a Law Caſe, whether his Heir might lawfully 'detain his Inheritance bequeath'd to him by his 'Death, and he, though reſtored to Life, have 'no Plea or Title to his former Poſſeſſions. 'Whether *Eve* was framed out of the left ſide of '*Adam*, I diſpute not; becauſe I ſtand not yet 'aſſured, which is the right ſide of a Man, 'or whether there be any ſuch diſtinction in 'Nature. That *Eve* was Edified of the Rib of '*Adam*, I believe, yet raiſe no queſtion who 'ſhall ariſe with that Rib at the Reſurrection. 'Whether *Adam* was an Hermophrodite, as 'the Rabbins contend upon the Letter of the 'Text (*Geneſ.* 1. 27.) becauſe it is contrary 'to Reaſon there ſhou'd be an Hermophrodite 'before there was a Woman, or a Compoſition 'of two Natures before there was a ſecond com-'poſed. Likewiſe, whether the World was 'created in *Autumn*, *Winter*, *Summer* or the '*Spring*, becauſe it was created in them all: 'for whatſoever Sign the Sun poſſeſſeth, thoſe

'four

'four Seaſons are actually exiſtent: It being 'the nature of this Luminary to diſtinguiſh the 'ſeveral Seaſons of the Year, all which it makes 'at one time in the whole Earth, and ſucceſſive 'in any part thereof. That there was a Deluge 'once, whether in the time of *Deucalion* or 'Noah, ſeems not to me ſo great a Miracle, as 'that there is not one always. How all kinds 'of Creatures, not only in their own Bulks, 'but with a Competency of Food and Suſte-'nance, might be preſerved in one Ark, and 'within the Extent of Three hundred Cubits, 'will not appear very feaſible. There is alſo 'another Secret not contain'd in Scripture, 'which is more hard to comprehend, and put 'the honeſt Father (St. *Auſtin*) to the Refuge 'of a Miracle; and, that is, not only how the 'diſtinct pieces of the World, and divided 'Iſlands, ſhould be firſt Planted by Men, but 'Inhabited by Tygers, Panthers and Bears? 'How *America* abounded with Beaſts of pr y 'and noxious Animals, yet contained not in it 'that neceſſary Creature, a Horſe, is very 'ſtrange. By what Paſſage thoſe, not only 'Birds, but dangerous and unwelcom Beaſts 'came over? How there be Creatures there 'which are not found in this tripple Con-'tinent? All which muſt needs be ſtrange, to 'us that hold but one Ark, and that the Crea-'tures began their Progreſs from the Moun-'tain *Ararat*. 'Tis a Paradox to me, that '*Methuſalem* was the longeſt liv'd of all the

'Children of *Adam*; and no Man will be
'able to prove it, when from the Proceſs of
'the Text, I can manifeſt it may be other-
'wiſe. Alſo that *Judas* periſhed by hanging
'himſelf, there is no certainty in Scripture,
'the two Texts (*Matth.* 25. and *Acts* 1. 18.)
'ſeeming to contradict one another. That our
'Fathers after the Flood, erected the Tower
'of *Babel* to preſerve themſelves againſt a ſe-
'cond Deluge, is generally believed, yet is
'there another Intention of theirs expreſs'd in
'Scripture: Beſides it is improbable from the
'Circumſtance of the Place, which was a
'Plain in the Land of *Shinar*. I believe there
'was a Tree, whoſe Fruit our unhappy Pa-
'rents taſted, though in the ſame Chapter,
'where God forbids it, 'tis poſſitively ſaid,
'the Plants of the Field were not yet grown;
'for God had not then cauſed it to rain upon
'the Earth. I believe that the Serpent (if
'we ſhall literally underſtand it) from his
'proper Form and Figure, made his Motion
'his Belly before the Curſe. I find the tryal
'of the Pucillage and Virginity of Women,
'which God ordained the *Jews*, is very fallible.
'Experience and Hiſtory inform me, that not
'only many particular Women, but likewiſe
'whole Nations have eſcaped the Curſe of
'Childbirth, which God ſeems to pronounce
'upon the whole Sex. Having peruſed the
'Archidoxes, and read the ſecret Sympathies
'of things, the Devil would diſſwade my Be-
'lief

' lief from the Miracle of the Brazen Serpent,
' and make me conceit that Image workt by
' Sympathy, and was but an *Ægyptian* Trick
' to cure their Diſeaſes with a Miracle. A-
' gain, having ſeen ſome Experiments of *Bi-*
' *tumen*, and read many more of *Naphtha*, he
' whiſper'd to my Curioſity, the Fire of the
' Altar might be natural; and bid me miſtruſt
' a Miracle of *Elias*, when he entrenched the
' Altar round with Water, ſince that inflam-
' mable Subſtance yields not eaſily to Water,
' but flames in the Arms of its Antagoniſt. And
' thus would he inveagle my Belief to think the
' Combuſtion of *Sodom* might be natural, and
' that there was an Aſphaltic and Bituminous
' Nature in that Lake, before the Fire of *Go-*
' *morrah*. I know that Manna is now plenti-
' fully gathered in *Calabria*, and *Joſephus* tells
' me in his Days it was as plentiful in *Arabia*;
' the Devil therefore made me Quære, where
' was then the Miracle in the Days of *Moſes*,
' ſince the *Iſraelites* ſaw but that in his time,
' which the Natives of thoſe Countries behold
' in ours? *Brown's Religio Medici.* Alſo in his
Vulgar Errors, our ſame Author writes thus:
' —— It hath puzzled the Enquiries of others
' to apprehend, and forced them to ſtrange
' Conceptions, to make out how *Eve* ſhould be
' deluded by a Serpent, or ſubject her Reaſon
' to a Beaſt, which God had ſubjected to hers?
' and how without Fear and Doubt ſhe could
' Diſcourſe with ſuch a Creature, or hear a

'Serpent ſpeak, without ſuſpicion of Impo-
'ſture. Others wonder at her ſimplicity,
'that when the Serpent told her the eating
'that Fruit would make them like Gods, ſhe
'did not queſtion the Beaſt, why he himſelf
'did not eat of it then. *Brown, Vul. Err.*

Now as one obſerves very well, in relation to Divine Miracles, there is oftentimes great Errors committed in the manner of reading Scripture; as when that is taken in a general Sence, which ought to be particularly underſtood: As that of *Adam*, whom *Moſes* made only to be the firſt Father of the *Jews*, whilſt others Hyperbolically make him to be the firſt Father of all Men. So likewiſe the Darkneſs at the Death of our Saviour, which ſome ſay was ſpread over the Face of the whole Earth: Others, and ſome able Interpreters, have only tranſlated it, *Upon all the Land of the Jews, viz. Paleſtine*, which the *Hebrews* always meant, when they ſaid the Earth. So likewiſe the Star which Conducted the Wiſemen upon the Nativity of Chriſt, ſome place in Heaven among the reſt of the Stars; but others ſay, that could not be, for then other People had ſeen it as well as thoſe few Wiſemen, and *Herod* among the reſt; who being troubled at this Report, and not being able to ſee it himſelf, calling the Wiſemen to him privately (ſays the Evangeliſt) he enquired of them what time the Star did appear? And beſides it marched before them

like

like a Torch, and conducted them; ſo that it cannot be ſaid to have been a fixed Star in the Heavens. Again, ſome will tell you, that the Fiery Army ſent to the help of *Eliſha* from Heaven was ſuch, whom the Prophet himſelf ſaw, and yet his Servant that ſtood by him could not ſee. Likewiſe in the miraculous Sign which was given of *Ezekiah*'s Recovery from his Sickneſs, when 'tis ſaid, —— That God brought back the ſhadow of thoſe Lines that it had gone down in the Dial of *Achaz* back ten Degrees —— Here ſome affirm, That the Sun went not back in the Heaven (as 'tis generally believed) but only in the Dial of *Achaz*; for, ſay they, if the Sun went back in the *Zodiac*, or that Degree of the Ecliptic ſtanding ſtill, which he was running that Day, the *Primum Mobile* came alſo backwards, and with it all the reſt of the Spheres; if we ſay that he went back only in the *Zodiac*, and a tenth part of the *Zodiac*; then ſay they the Sun muſt needs return through a great many Signs of the *Zodiac*, and bring back with him paſt Months, yea, and Seaſons of the Year. Beſides, that this Sign was ſeen only in the Land of *Judah* and not elſewhere, they pretend to prove from Ambaſſadors which were ſent from *Babylon* to enquire after the Sign, which (ſay they) might have been ſeen in *Babylon*, as well as in *Judah*, had the Sun gone back in the Firmament. Much to the ſame purpoſe they argue againſt the Miracle of the Suns ſtanding ſtill one whole

Day in *Gabaon* at the command of *Joshua*, alledging, That that long day extended not it self beyond the Country of *Gabaon*, or otherwise it must have been apparent elsewhere: And therefore they urge, That the Light of the setting Sun after he was himself gone down, was only the Reflection of his Beams, remaining as yet in the Atmosphere, which reverberated longer than ordinary upon the Mountain and City of *Gabaon*, by a favourable Scituation of the Hills: In the North of *Scotland* they have at sometimes in Summer hardly any Night at all; and some Mathematicians write, that according to the Obliquity of the Sphere, there were some Days of six Months continuance, with them who live under the Parallel. Likewise concerning the Miracle of the *Jews*, not wearing out their Garments or their Shooes in Forty Years time that they continued in the Wilderness; some pretend, that they feeding a Thousand Flocks in the Desart, made Cloath and Rayment of their Wool, as well as Shooes of their Skin and Leather, wanting neither Weavers, Taylors nor Shoemakers among so numerous a Mob. Now lastly, others will not allow that the Flood of *Noah* was upon the whole Earth, but only upon the Land of the *Jews*; nor to destroy all Men, but only the *Jews*: For, say they, God being offended at their Wickedness, said, I will cut off Man whom I have created from the Face of the Earth, from the Man to the Beast, from the creeping thing

thing to the Fowl of the Heaven —— Where they will have it, that the *Hebrews* by Earth ever meant their own, *viz. Paleſtine*; by the Man whom he had created, the *Jews*, the Poſterity of *Adam*; and by living Creatures the *Gentiles* match'd among the *Jews*: Beſides Cattle, Birds and all creeping Things within the Land of *Paleſtine*, except only *Noah* and his Family. Now that this Flood was only in the Land of the *Jews*, they argue; Firſt, From the Cauſes of the Deluge, which were only the Sins of the *Jews*: Secondly, From the words of *Beroſus*, who hath written of the Ark (ſays *Joſephus*) in which the chief of our Family was preſerved; not the chief of Mankind, but the chief of our Lineage, that is, the *Jews*. Thirdly, From the Dove that was ſent out and returned at Night with an Olive-branch free from Dirt or Slime and cover'd with green Leaves; whereas, ſay they, in all places where the Flood had been, the Trees were depreſs'd and cover'd with Slime and Mud. They further tell you, That the World was ſaid to be divided by *Peleg*, who was the Fifth in Deſcent from *Sem*, wherefore they queſtion, how they could People *China*, *America*, the *Southland*, *Greenland* and the reſt with Inhabitants? Theſe and many more Scruples are raiſed by ſome nice and curious Enquirers; ſo that we ſee our Learned Dr. *Burnet* ſtands not alone by himſelf in his more refined and ſpeculative Doubts. All which might eaſily be ſalved, were it not for

that

that untoward Axiom in Philoſophy, *à Poſſe ad eſſe non valet conſequentia*: However as that Argument ſhews it may not be ſo, yet neither does it demonſtrate it is not ſo. For God ſeldom alters or perverts the Courſe of Nature, however Miracles may be neceſſary ſometimes to acquaint the World with his Prerogative, leaſt the Arrogance of our Reaſon ſhould queſtion his Power; a Crime no wiſe Man can ever be guilty of: Who climbing up from Cauſe to Cauſe, ſhall ever find the higheſt Link of Nature's Chain to be tyed at the Foot of *Jupiter's* Chair ———

The next Charge againſt our Author is for his diſowning Original Sin, which I muſt ingeguouſly confeſs was ever a difficult Pill with me to ſwallow, my Reaſon ſtopping it in my Throat, and not having Faith enough to waſh it down. There are ſome Perſons, I know, who believe that Wars, Plagues, Feavers and all the Troop of natural Corruptions invaded the Earth by that imputation of the Sin of *Adam*, without diſcriminating between Natural and Legal Sin. For Wars, Plagues and Feavers, with whatever elſe of this ſort troubles and afflicts Mankind, are the conſequences of Natural Sin, which is the Wickedneſs and Imperfection of Nature. This will eaſily appear to ſuch, who can ſuffer that ancient Cloud of Prepoſſeſſion to be taken off, which dulls their ſight; for who knows not that Wars had

had their Original from ſuch, whom either greedy Deſire of Prey, or cruel Thirſt after Revenge, or ſacred Ambition of Rule ſtirr'd up to take Arms? Then who hath not had experience of the Breeding and Inflammation of Plagues and Feavers, either by the natural Corruption of the Air, or by the Corruption of our natural Bodies? We have as many Witneſſes of this Obſervation and Truth, as we have States-men and Phyſicians, therefore not from *Adam*'s Sin proceed our Diſeaſes, but from our own Corrupt and Rotten Natures; the innate Infirmity of Men being the chief and natural Calamity of Men. Nay it is not known that *Adam* who was the Criminal and Fountain (as they ſay) of ſo great Evils, was ever ſo much as troubled with the leaſt Diſeaſe all thoſe 930. Years which he lived; unleſs you will believe him, who relates, out of I know not what Author, that *Adam* died of the Gout, wherewith he was troubled from his Anceſtors. Did *Cain* fall ſick when he ſlew his Brother? No; he was very ſtrong and luſty, he fled to the *Eaſt* of *Eden*, where he aſſociated himſelf with a pack of Lewd Fellows; he ſet up for the Trade of Padding, then married a Wife, begot a Son, and built a City. Likewiſe the moſt excellent Poet falls out with his Gods, for that his Miſtreſs (*Eugenia*) being perjured, kept the ſame Face which ſhe had before, or rather became fairer and fairer: The ſame is

alſo

alſo the conſtant complaint of the Elect in Scripture, That the Wicked proſper ſo much in this World. Wherefore to me it ſeems certain, that the Imputation of *Adam*'s Sin is no ways an occaſion of our Sufferings. I know there are ſome affirm, That if *Adam* had not ſinn'd, Men ſhould never have died; as if Immortality and Eternal Life, which nothing but a New Creation could beget, ſhould have been beſtow'd on Men by Vertue of the Firſt Creation, which by its own Nature is ſubject to Death and Corruption: And that thoſe Men ſhould not have died, who (as the Schools ſay) are naturally Corruptible, and were created Mortal. Some will here object and ſay, God told *Adam*, *That on the Day he eat that Fruit, he ſhould die the Death*; from whence they gather, That if Death was given as a Puniſhment to *Adam* on that Day wherein he tranſgreſs'd the Law of God, then ſurely *Adam* would never have died, if he had never ſinn'd: But that Conſequence I deny; for although they die which kill, yet they who do not kill are not Immortal. Beſides, to conclude this point, 'tis altogether inconſiſtent with God's Attributes of Mercy and Juſtice, to puniſh all Mankind for one ſingle Perſons ſin, which we could no ways prevent or hinder, nor any but God himſelf, who permitted that Evil Spirit to Reign in him. The *Roman* Schools affirm the firſt Motions of Concupiſcence to be no ſin; becauſe they

they are involuntary, and come upon us whether we will or no; then why ſhould they think Original Sin to be really and truly a Sin in us, which is altogether as involuntary, and unchoſen by us as Concupiſcence? For how can anothers ſin, wherein we have no hand, be imputed to us? Eternal Death was not threatned to *Adam* for his ſin, and therefore could not from him deſcend upon us, for that which was none of ours. The Death that *Adam*'s Sin introduced is ſuch as could have a Remedy or Recompence by Chriſt, but eternal Death hath no Recompence, nor can ever be deſtroy'd, whereas temporal Death ſhall. If God ſhould impute *Adam*'s Sin ſo as to damn us for it, then all our Good we receive from God, is much leſs than the Evil, ſaith Dr. *Taylor*. If God will not give Men Heaven by Chriſt, he will not throw them into Hell by *Adam*; if his Goodneſs will not do the Firſt, his Mercy and Juſtice will not ſuffer him to do the Laſt. Nor did any Church ever enjoyn Pennance or Repentance for Original Sin; wherefore it ſeems prepoſterous and unreaſonable, that any Man ſhould be damn'd for that, which no Man is bound to Repent. However I do no way find that Dr. *Burnet* does abſolutely declare againſt Original Sin; but rather the contrary, acknowledging the Degeneracy of Mankind from its primitive State, which muſt be redeem'd by the Seed of a Woman. All Extreams are

dange-

dangerous, as walking upon the Brink of a Precipice or the like, and if he be not ſo violent in this Point; what others may only think he wants in Piety, may perhaps be really ſupplied in Charity: And what they only fancy they have in Piety, may be truly defective in Charity: An honeſt Augure is ever in moſt danger of his own Fraternity.

But to proceed, it hath been a point very much diſputed among ſeveral Politicians in the Commonwealth of Learning, who was the real and true Author of the Pentateuch. A late and great Modern Philoſopher of this Nation declares, It is not an Argument ſufficient to prove thoſe Books were written by *Moſes*, becauſe they are call'd the Five Books of *Moſes*; for, as much as Books often take their Titles from their Subject, as well as from their Authors. It's true, the Hiſtory of *Livy* denotes the Writer, but the Hiſtory of *Tamberlain* is denominated from the Subject. We read in the laſt Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, *v. 6th.* concerning the Sepulcher of *Moſes*, that no Man knoweth his Sepulcher to this Day, that is to ſay, to the Day wherein thoſe Words were written; wherefore it is manifeſt that thoſe Words were written after his Interment. But it may perhaps be alledged, That the laſt Chapter only, and not the whole *Pentateuch*, was written by ſome other hand, and the reſt by

by *Moſes*. Let us therefore conſider, that which we find in the Book of *Geneſis* (cap. 12. *v.* 6.) and *Abraham* paſſed through the Land to the place of *Sichem*, unto the Plain of *Moreh*, and the *Canaanite* was then in the Land; which muſt be the Words of one that wrote when the *Canaanite* was not in the Land, and conſequently not of *Moſes*, who died before he came into it. Likewiſe, *Numb.* 21. *v.* 14. the Writer citeth another more ancient Book, entituled, the Book of the Wars of the Lord, wherein were Regiſtred the Acts of *Moſes* at the *Red-Sea*, and at the Brook of *Amon*; which he would never have mention'd of himſelf, but could as well have given us an account himſelf of what he did in thoſe places. Wherefore it is evident, That the Five Books of *Moſes* were written by another Hand after his Deceaſe. But yet it is rational to believe that *Moſes* wrote the Volume of the Law, contain'd in the 11*th.* of *Deuteronomy*, and the following Chapters to the 27*th.* which he commanded to be written on Stones in Entry into the Land of *Canaan*. Alſo *Moſes* himſelf deliver'd it to the Prieſts and Elders of *Iſrael* to be read every ſeventh Year to all *Iſrael* at their Aſſembly in the Feaſt of Tabernacles, as we may find in the 31*ſt.* Chapter of *Deuteronomy v.* 9*th.* Nay, it may be alſo queſtion'd, whether the aforeſaid was that very Law which *Moſes* delivered, ſince having been a long time loſt, *Helkiah* pretended to find it again,

again, and ſo ſent it to King *Joſias* (2 *Kings* 22. 8. and the 23. 1, 2, 3.) ſo that we have only *Helkiah's* Word for it. The Book of *Joſhua* was alſo written long after *Joſhua's* time, which may be gather'd out of many places of the Book it ſelf: *Joſhua* had ſet up twelve Stones in the midſt of *Jordan* for a Monument of their Paſſage; of which the Writer ſaith (*Joſhua* 4. 9.) *They are there unto this day*; which Expreſſion, *Unto this day*, is a Phraſe that ſignifieth a Time paſt. And the ſame is manifeſt by like Arguments of the Books of *Judges* and *Ruth*, that they were written long after the Captivity, *Judges* chap. 1. 21, 26. chap. 6. 24. chap. 10. 4. chap. 15. 19. chap. 17. 6. and *Ruth* chap. 1. 1. but eſpecially *Judges* 18. 30.

Now the Reaſon why I make mention of theſe things is only to ſhew, That our moſt Reverend and Ingenious Author is not the firſt that has had ſcruples in this kind, and that he may well make an Enquiry into the Truth of ſome Paſſages of the Hiſtory, when the very Hiſtorians themſelves are ſo much doubted of by others; not but that we may pay a juſt deference to the Church, and yet at the ſame time raiſe ſcruples for information ſake, the better to arm our ſelves againſt our Antagoniſts.

The

The next little Part or Epilogue of Dr. *Burnet*'s Book, which we here preſent you with in *Engliſh*, is his *Appendix* concerning the *Brachmin*'s Religion, and has reference to one of his former Chapters on the ſame Subject. I muſt confeſs his Notion of their Omnipotent Spider (though what I have read many Years ſince) was no leſs grateful to me, than the return of a Friend after a long Voyage. That thought of Reſolving all things into himſelf, an Eſtate for Life that falls into the Landlords hands. Sure no good Tenant needs fear a good new Leaſe the State of Man, if rightly well conſider'd, is only wearing out our Threads of Life, in order to our Deaths. And he that weighs our Progreſs here, the great Viciſſitudes without decay, ſince things may change, but ne'er annihilate, will find *Penelope Telam Texere* is our caſe: Dreſs and undreſs the Emblem of our Lives, till ſhrowded in our mortal *Diſhabilliè*, we wait the Morning for a different Dreſs; when the Celeſtial Drop as now enclos'd, may to a different Viol be expoſed. But I ſhall trouble you no more upon this ſubject, leaſt you ſhould miſtake it for the fooliſh Funeral Sermon of,

SIR,

Your ever Faithful Friend

and Real Servant,

March 23. 1693.

BLOUNT.

The

The *7th.* and *8th.* Chapters of Dr. *Burnet's Archiologiæ Philoſophicæ*, together with his Appendix to the ſame concerning the *Brachmin's* Religion, all Written Originally in *Latin*, and now rendred into *Engliſh*, by Mr. *H. B.*

CHAP. VII.

Concerning Moſes's *Deſcription of Paradice as well as the Original State of Nature and Mankind in the beginning of the World.*

WE have hitherto made our Enquiry after the Originals of things as well as after a true knowledg of Paradiſe among the Ancients; yet ſtill with reference to Sacred Writ, where it gave us any manner of light into the Subject, but think it altogether unneceſſary to define the place or ſituation

ſituation of Paradice; ſince in reſpect to the Theory of the Earth, 'tis much the ſame thing where you place it, provided it be not on our modern Earth. Now if you enquire among the ancient Fathers where the ſcituation of it was, either they will have it to be none at all, or elſe obſcure and remote from our underſtanding; ſome of them indeed term it an Intelligible Paradice, but confin'd to no one particular place; whilſt others at the ſame time make it a ſenſible one; and here it is they firſt divided about it. Moreover, ſuch as believe it to be a Senſible and Corporeal Paradice, place it either on this Earth, or out of it, (*viz.*) in the Air or in the Lunary Orb; when they who believe thoſe happy Manſions to have been upon the Earth, place them either on this ſide the Æquator, under the Æquator, or beyond the Æquator or Torrid Zone; finally all that are of our opinion believe the true Paradice, which is now paſſed away did in reality formerly flouriſh upon the Earth, but nevertheleſs on ſuch an Earth as was quite different from what we now inhabit. However theſe different opinions we have elſe-where more at large explained; eſpecially that which carries Paradice beyond the Æquator, Torrid Zone, the Ocean and our Northern World. Not that this opinion pleaſes me above the reſt but becauſe it is demonſtrated by the Calculations of the Ancients; and plainly evinces the Paradice we now pretend to place in *Meſopotamia*, to be only a Modern fiction. Beſides, as to the

Theory

Theory of the Earth, it does not in the leaſt obviate a Local Paradice in any part of the Earth; ſince it ſuppoſes that in the Infant world even the whole inhabitable Globe was like a Paradice. Yet notwithſtanding conſequentially and agreeably to the Moſaic Hypotheſis, which makes Mankind how numerous ſoever to have firſt receiv'd its birth only from one Man and one Woman, you may therefore (if you pleaſe) appropriate the name of Paradice to the original native ſoil and firſt habitation of theſe two; a place moſt wonderfully beautified as well with Trees as Waters; provided at the ſame time you grant to the other parts of the ſame Earth a Perpetual Spring, and thoſe advantages which neceſſarily flow from it, (*viz.*) ſpontaneous fertility together with long life to its inhabitants; for that the World did in its firſt beginning enjoy all theſe bleſſings we have ſufficiently demonſtrated as well from the nature of the thing it ſelf as from the teſtimonies of the Ancients. Ay but, ſay you, *Moſes* mentions only one Garden which he calls *Gan Eden* or the Garden of Deliciouſneſs; and ſeems to ſuppoſe that all the other Regions of that Earth enjoyed but one and the ſame common Lot with little variation from our modern Earth: Now to this I anſwer, That among the Ancients, but more eſpecially the Orientals, there were two different ways of delivering their Divinity and Philoſophy, (*viz.*) δημόδης καὶ ἀπόῤῥητος, a Popular and a hidden one; of which dubious ſort of ſtyle the Holy

Scri-

Scripture ſeems to make uſe in the explaining natural things; ſometimes accommodating it ſelf to the capacities of the people, and ſometimes to the real but more clouded truth.

However, being reſolv'd not in the leaſt to deviate from the very literal ſenſe without an abſolute neceſſity; that is to ſay, unleſs the Nature of the thing does unavoidably oblige or enforce me to it; we muſt firſt enquire what is in this caſe the literal ſenſe, and how much it will bear; as alſo, on the other ſide, what the Subject-matter will bear and what not; to the end that having thus fairly ſtated the caſe on both ſides, we may be the better enabled to give a certain determination according to the merits of the cauſe as well as to diſcloſe where the real truth lies hid.

Now the Hiſtory of Paradice (from whence we'll begin) according to *Moſes* is thus: When God had in ſix days finiſhed the Creation of the World, the ſeventh day he reſted from all manner of work: And here *Moſes* relates particularly each days Operation; but for the ſtory of Mankind, as well Male as Female, of that he makes a peculiar Treatiſe by it ſelf. Wherefore omitting the reſt at preſent, let us, if you pleaſe, conſider the *Moſaic* Doctrin upon theſe three ſubjects (*viz.*) *Adam*, *Eve* and the Garden of *Eden*; together with thoſe things which are interwoven or adherent to them. As to the firſt man *Adam*, *Moſes* ſays he was formed, not out of Stones or Dragons Teeth, as others have feigned

feigned concerning their man; but out of the duſt or clay of the Earth; and when his Body was formed, *God blew into his noſtrils the breath of life, and man was made a living ſoul*, Gen. 2. 7.

But after another manner and of other matter was the Woman built (*viz.*) with one of *Adams* ſmall bones; for as *Adam* lay aſleep, God took away one of his ribs, and out of that made *Eve*. The words of *Moſes* are theſe, *And the Lord God cauſed a deep ſleep to fall upon Adam, and he ſlept; and he took one of his ribs and cloſed up the fleſh inſtead thereof: And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman and brought her unto the man for a wife*, Gen. 2. 21.

So much for the forming of the firſt Man and firſt Woman according to the literal Reading. Now *Moſes* has likewiſe given us a large account of their firſt habitation; he ſays that God made them a certain famous Garden in the Eaſt, or as others render it *ab antiquo*, of old; and gave it to them as a Farm to cultivate and inhabit; which Garden was a moſt delightful place, watered with four ſeveral Fountains or Rivers, planted with Trees of all kinds, as well thoſe that bore fruit as thoſe that were agreeable for their ſhade and aſpect. Amongſt which Trees in the midſt of the Garden, ſtood two more remarkable than the reſt, whereof one was called the Tree of Life, the other the Tree of Death, or of the Knowledg of Good and Evil. Why one was called the Tree of Life is

not

not certain; perhaps becauſe whoever had eat of it, would have from it received Immortality, as many conjecture. The effect of the other fatal experience has ſufficiently taught us: *Hinc illæ Lachrymæ & infandus dolor*: 'Tis for our firſt Parents eating the fruit of this Tree that all their Poſterity now ſmarts; and is puniſhed for a crime committed ſome thouſands of years before they were born. But of this I'le here preſent you with a full relation.

God upon pain of death prohibits *Adam* and *Eve* from taſting the fruit of this Tree; But it happened upon a time that *Eve* ſitting ſolitarily under this Tree without her Husband, there came to her a Serpent or Adder, which, tho I know not by what means or power, civilly accoſted the Woman (if we may judg of the thing by the event) in theſe words, or to this purpoſe.

Serp. All Hail moſt fair one, what are you doing ſo ſolitary and ſerious under this Shade?

Eve. I am contemplating the beauty of this Tree.

Serp. 'Tis truly an agreeable ſight but much pleaſanter are the fruits thereof. Have you taſted them my Lady?

Eve. I have not, becauſe God has forbidden us to eat of this Tree.

Serp. What do I hear! who is that God that envies his Creatures the innocent delights of Nature? Nothing is ſweeter, nothing more wholſom than this very fruit; why then ſhould

he forbid it, unleſs he were in jeſt?

Eve. But he has forbid it us on pain of death.

Serp. Undoubtedly you miſtake his meaning: This Tree has nothing that would prove fatal to you, but rather ſomething Divine and above the common force of nature.

Eve. I can give you no anſwer, but will firſt go to my Husband and then do as he thinks fit.

Serp. Why ſhould you trouble your Husband about ſuch a trifle? Uſe your own judgment.

Eve. Let me ſee, had I beſt uſe it or no? what can be more beautiful than this Apple? How ſweetly it ſmells! but it may be it taſts ill.

Serp. Believe me 'tis a bit worthy to be eaten by the Angels themſelves; do but try, and if it taſts ill, throw it away, and ſay I am a great Lyar.

Eve. Well, I'le try then; thou haſt not deceived me; it has indeed a moſt agreeable flavour. Give me another that I may carry it to my Husband.

Serp. Very well thought on; here's another for you; go to your Husband with it. Farewell happy young Woman. —— In the mean time I'le go my ways, let her take care of the reſt.

Accordingly *Eve* gave this Apple to the too uxorious *Adam*, which he likewiſe eat off; when immediately upon their eating of it they became both (I know not how) aſhamed of their Nakedneſs; and ſowing together Fig-leaves made them

them a ſort of Aprons to cover their *Pudenda*. Now after theſe tranſactions God did in the Evening deſcend into the Garden; upon which our firſt Parents fled to hide themſelves among the thickeſt of the Trees; but in vain, for God called out, *Adam*, where art thou? When he trembling appeared before the Almighty, and ſaid, Lord, when I heard thee in this Garden, I was aſhamed becauſe of my nakedneſs, and hid my ſelf amongſt the moſt ſhady parts of the thicket. Who told thee, ſaid God, that thou wert naked? Have you eaten of the forbidden fruit? That Woman thou gaveſt me brought it, 'twas ſhe that made me eat on't. You have finely order'd your buſineſs, you and your wife! Here, you Woman, what is this that you have done? Alas for me, thy Serpent gave me the Apple and I did eat of it.

This Apple ſhall coſt you dear, and not only you but your poſterity and the whole race of Mankind. Moreover, for this crime I will curſe and ſpoil the Heavens, the Earth and whole Fabric of Nature. But thou in the firſt place vile beaſt ſhalt bear the puniſhment of thy craftineſs and malice. Hereafter ſhalt thou go creeping on thy belly, and inſtead of eating Apples ſhalt lick the duſt of the Earth. As for you Mrs. *Curious*, who ſo much love Delicacies, in ſorrow ſhall you bring forth Children; you ſhall be ſubject to your Husband, and ſhall never depart from his ſide unleſs having firſt obtained his leave. Laſtly, as for

you *Adam*, becauſe you have hearkened more to your Wife than to me, with the ſweat of your brow you ſhall obtain your food both for her and her Children. You ſhall not gather fruits, which, as heretofore, grew of themſelves, but ſhall reap the fruits of the Earth with labour and trouble. May the Earth, for thy ſake accurſed, hereafter grow barren; may ſhe produce thiſtles, thorns, tares, with other hurtful and unprofitable herbs; and when thou haſt here led a troubleſom laborious life, *Duſt thou art, to Duſt thou ſhalt return.* In the mean while let theſe Rebels be baniſhed out of my Garden, and ſent as Exiles into ſtrange Lands; leaſt they alſo eat the fruit of the Tree of Life, and live for ever. However, for fear they ſhould periſh through the cold or inclemency of the Weather, the Almighty made them Doublets of the Skins of Animals, and being thus clad, he thruſts them out of Paradice. Finally, to prevent their return, he placed Angels at the entrance of his Garden, who by brandiſhing a Flaming-ſword, and waving it on all ſides guarded the paſſage that led to the Tree of Life.

This is the Summ and Subſtance of *Moſes*'s Account concerning Paradice, and the firſt State of Minkind; which keeping always cloſe to the Senſe, I have explained in other words that we may more freely judge of the thing it ſelf; as if it were written by a Modern Author.

Now

Now that there are in this Relation ſome things Parabolical, and, which will not bear a conſtruction altogether, Literal, there are few but do allow. Nay, ſome proceed farther, and will have even the whole Diſcourſe to be artificially figurative, in order to explain things that were really true (*viz.*) the new and degenerate Condition of Mankind; as alſo paradiſiac State of Infant Nature, and its Degeneracy. For although in the beginning of the Diſcourſe, this ſtate of Paradice ſeems confin'd only to one Region, which is called *Gan Eden*, yet afterwards, when the Curſe of Barrenneſs comes out, the whole Earth is brought in for a ſhare. *The Earth ſhall not for the future bring forth her increaſe of her own accord, nor any of her Fruits without Tillage and Husbandry*; *but hereafter*, ſaith the Lord, *with the Sweat of thy brow ſhalt thou get thoſe things that are neceſſary for Life and Suſtenance.* Whence 'tis evident, that before this Alteration or Curſe, the whole Earth yielded her Increaſe without Planting or Labour; for otherwiſe by this Curſe nothing had been made new, nothing had been chang'd in the Face of Nature. Beſides from another thing it plainly appears, that one ſmall Country or ſome few Acres of Land, ſuch as is a Garden, could not alone enjoy this Fertility, together with thoſe other Priviledges as well of Air as Soil; but that the whole inhabitable Globe did partake of them in the primitive State of things. For ſuppoſe *Adam* had continued In-

nocent, how would there have been room for his Poſterity within the incloſures of one Garden? Or admit you will have them all ſhut up there, like ſo many unfledg'd Birds in a Neſt, what muſt have been done with all thoſe other vaſt Tracts of Earth? Should they have ſtood Empty, Deſert, and without Inhabitants?

Nature it ſelf does not allow of that, neither is it becoming the Divine Wiſdom. From all theſe things we may conclude what is very agreeable to Reaſon *(viz.)* That *Moſes* puts the part for the whole, and laid one Example before the Eyes of the People inſtead of a greater number; becauſe it was more ſuitable to the Genius and Underſtanding of the Vulgar to conceive a pleaſant Garden or ſingle Field, than that the whole Globe of the Earth ſhould put on a new Face and new Nature entirely different from what we now enjoy. But let us proceed in the Road we have begun.

The aforeſaid Relation conſiſts of five or ſix parts, whereof the firſt is, concerning the Birth and Formation of the firſt of Mankind. The ſecond, the Deſcription of the Garden *Eden*. The third is, the Hiſtory of the two Trees of Life and Death. The fourth treats of the Serpent's Conference with *Eve*. The fifth about the Wrath of God and his Curſe for eating the forbidden Fruit. Laſtly, the ſixth contains the Expulſion of theſe firſt of Mankind out of the Almighty's Garden, as

alſo

alſo how God made them Coats of Skins, and placed Angels with flaming Swords at the Entrance of his Garden; together with other things hereto belonging.

Great is the force of Cuſtom and a preconceived Opinion over human Minds. Wherefore theſe ſhort Obſervations or Accounts of the firſt Originals of Men and Things, which we receive from the Mouth of *Moſes*, are embraced without the leaſt Demurr or Examination of them. But had we read the ſame Doctrin in another, for Example, in a *Greek* Philoſopher, or in a Rabbinical or Mahometan Doctor, we ſhould have ſtop'd at every period with our mind full of Objections and Scruples. Now this difference does not ariſe from the Nature of the thing it ſelf, or of the Matter in hand, but from the great Opinion we have of the Faithfulneſs and Authority of the Writer, as being divinely inſpired.

All which we willingly acknowledge, neither do we in this occaſion doubt of our Author's Authority, but with what intent it was that he wrote theſe Things, and what kind of Style he has made uſe of, whether *Plebeian* or *Philoſophical*; I ſay, *Plebeian* and not Fabulous, although this laſt word might have been uſed, did we ſpeak of a Prophane Author. Now of Fables, ſome are pure Fictions; others are built upon ſome Foundation, but beautified with Additions and acquired Ornaments. Be-

ſides there are ſome Relations that have Truth at the bottom, but not in every particular point of them; only as to the ſubſtance of the thing, and driſt of the Author. As in Chriſt's Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus*, and in many things which are related concerning the Day of Judgment, as to the outward ſhell and form. Such kind of Relations I think ought not to be termed Fables, but ſometimes Parables, and ſometimes ὑποθέσεις δημώδεις, Hypotheſes adapted to the Vulgar. And if in this rank you place the Narration we have now in hand, preſerving always the good Name and Honour of the Author, I ſhall not think it amiſs.

But let us, if you pleaſe, firſt examin ſome Articles herein.

As to the Temporal Riſe of Mankind, I have ever held it moſt certain and undoubted: and that upwards of 5000 Years, according to the account given us by Sacred Chronology. But out of what Matter the firſt of Mankind, whether Male or Female was compoſed, is not ſo eaſily diſcover'd, nor of ſo great importance to know. If God had a Mind to make a Woman ſtart from one of *Adam*'s Ribs, 'tis true it ſeems to be a Matter not very proper, but however, out of any Wood, Stone or other Being God can make a Woman: And here, by the by, the Curious ask whether this Rib was uſeleſs to *Adam*, and beyond the number requiſite in a compleat Body?

If

If not, when it was taken away, *Adam* would have been a maim'd Perſon, and robbed of a part of himſelf that was neceſſary. I ſay *neceſſary*, for as much as I ſuppoſe that in the Fabric of a Human Body nothing is ſuperfluous, and that no one Bone can be taken away without endamaging the whole, or rendring it in ſome meaſure imperfect. But if on the other ſide you ſay this Rib was really uſeleſs to *Adam*, and might be ſpared; ſo that you make him to have had only twelve Ribs on one ſide, and thirteen on the other; they will reply that this is like a Monſter; as much as if the firſt Man had been created with three Feet or three Hands, or had had more Eyes or other Members than the uſe or compleatneſs of an human Body requires. But in the beginning all Things were made with Number, Weight and Meaſure, that is to ſay, with all imaginable Exactneſs.

For my part, I do not pretend to decide this diſpute, but what more perplexes me is, how out of only one Rib the whole Maſs of a Womans Body could be built? For a Rib does not equal the hundredth, perhaps not the Thouſandth part of an entire Body. If you anſwer that the reſt of the matter was taken from elſewhere, certainly *Eve* might much more truly be ſaid to have been formed out of that borrowed matter whatever it was, than out of *Adams* Rib. I know very well that the Rabbinical Doctors ſolve this buſineſs quite another

way; for they ſay, the firſt man had two Bodies, the one male and the other female, whoſe ſides ſtuck together, or (as ſome will have it) their Backs; that God cut them aſunder, and having thus Cloven *Eve* from *Adam*, gave her to him for a Wife. *Plato* has in his *Sympoſium* ſomething very like this Story, concerning his firſt man *Androgynus*, who was afterwards divided into two parts, Male and Female. Laſtly, others conjecture (which is not improbable) that *Moſes* gave out this original of Woman to the end he might breed a mutual Love between the two Sexes as parts of one and the ſame whole; and that by this means he might more effectually recommend to his people his own inſtitution of Marriage (which does unite them a ſecond time) as if it had been imprinted in nature it ſelf. But leaving this Subject I will haſten to ſomething elſe.

Now the ſecond Article treats of Gods Garden in *Eden*, water'd with four Rivers ariſing from the ſame Spring. Which Cœleſtial Garden mentioned by *Moſes* ſome will have to be the ſame with Διὸς Κῆπον, *Jupiters* Garden in *Plato*, and that in both places the Hiſtory or Allegory is the ſame, Κατὰ τινας ἀποῤῥήτους λόγους Μωσέως, according to the ſecret meanings of *Moſes*, as *Euſebius* ſaith, and I am ſo much the more willing to embrace theſe ſecret meanings in Relation to the Garden of *Eden*, becauſe there is no place in the whole World wherewith all the diſtinguiſhing Marks and Characters of this.

this Garden may agree, for not to ſpeak of that continual ſerenity of the Air, and ſpontaneous fertility of the place, even the very Rivers themſelves afford a moſt perplexing, and as yet undecided Controverſie both to Divines and Geographers as well Ancient as Modern.

Thoſe Rivers are by *Moſes* call'd *Piſhon*, *Giſhon*, *Hiddekel* and *Perath*, which the Ancient Authors interpret by *Ganges*, *Nile*, *Tigris* and *Euphrates*. Nor do I truly think without ſome reaſon; for *Moſes* ſeems to have propoſed nothing more to himſelf than the bringing four of the moſt celebrated and moſt fertile Rivers of the whole Earth to the watring of his Garden. Ay but, ſay you, theſe four Rivers do not ſpring from the ſame ſource, or come from the ſame place; 'tis true, nor any other four Rivers that are named by the Interpreters. Wherefore this Objection will every where hold good as well againſt the Ancient as Modern Writers. But altho you ſhould reduce theſe Rivers, only to two as ſome do, to *Tigris* and *Euphrates*, yet neither have theſe two Rivers the ſame Fountain-head, but this is really and truly an Evaſion rather than an Explanation, to reduce, contrary to the Hiſtory of *Moſes*, a greater number of Rivers to a ſmaller; only that they may the more conveniently be derived from the ſame Spring; for theſe are the words of *Moſes*, but there

Comes

Comes a River out of Eden to water the Garden, and from thence it divides it ſelf into four Branches: The Name of the firſt is Piſhon,&c. *Gen.* 2. 10. Whereby it is apparent that either in the entrance or *Exit* of the Garden, there were four Rivers; and that thoſe four Rivers did proceed from one and the ſame Fountain-head in *Eden*. Now pray tell me in what part of the Earth is this Country of *Eden*, where four Rivers ariſe from one and the ſame Spring? But do not go about to ſay that only two came from that Fountain of *Eden*, and that the other two aroſe from the *Tigris* and *Euphrates* where they ſplit near the Sea, and make as it were a Bifrontic Figure. Since this does by no means anſwer the words of *Moſes*. Beſides, he mentions in the firſt place *Piſhon* and *Giſhon*, and afterwards *Tigris* and *Euphrates* as leſſer Rivers; whereas you on the contrary will have thoſe to be derived from theſe laſt as Rivers of an inferior order; which is a manifeſt diſtorting the Hiſtorical Account. But to end all theſe Difficulties or Controverſies concerning the Originals and Channels of the Rivers that water'd Paradice, you will perhaps at laſt ſay that the Springs as well as the courſes of Rivers have been changed by the Univerſal Deluge. And that we cannnot therefore be now certain where it was they formerly broke out of the Earth, and what Countries they paſſed through. For my part

I am

I am much of your opinion, provided you confeſs there happened in the Deluge ſuch a fraction and diſruption of the Earth as we ſuppoſe there did; for from only an Inundation or Superabundancy of Waters ſuch a change could never poſſibly happen. Beſides, according to what Geography or Hydrography will you have *Moſes* to deſcribe theſe Rivers *Antidiluvian*, or *Poſtdiluvian*? If the latter, there has happened no conſiderable alteration of the Earth ſince the time of *Moſes* or the Flood; if the former, you then render *Moſes*'s deſcription of the Earth altogether ſuperfluous, and unuſeful to find out the ſituation of Paradice. Laſtly, 'tis hard to conceive that any Rivers, whether theſe or others, can have ſubſiſted ever ſince the very firſt beginning of the World, whether you have regard to their Waters or to their Channels. The Channels of Rivers uſed to be made by little and little as well as by a daily attrition, for if they had been made, as Ditches and Furrows are, by Earth dug out and heaped up on each ſide, or at leaſt on one ſide, there would certainly have been every where ſeen great Banks and Heaps of Earth. But we plainly perceive that this is only fortuitous; foraſmuch as they often run through Plains, and the River-banks are no more than level with the adjacent Fields, beſides whence could there be had water at the firſt foundation of the World to fill theſe Channels?

nels? If you ſay that on the third day when the great Bed of the Ocean was made the ſmaller Channels of the Rivers were alſo; and as the greateſt part of the Waters of the Abyſs fell into the Gulf of the Seas; ſo the remaining part deſcended into theſe other Channels, and therewith formed the Primitive Rivers, admitting this, yet the Waters would be not only as Salt as thoſe of the Sea, but there would be no continual Springs to nouriſh theſe Rivers; inſomuch that when the firſt ſtream of Water had flow'd off, there being no freſh Supplys of Water to ſucceed it, theſe Rivers would have immediately been dried up: I ſay becauſe there were no perpetual Springs, for whether Springs proceed from Rain, or from the Sea they could neither way have roſe in ſo ſhort a time; not from Rain for it had not as yet Rained, neither was it poſſible that in the ſmall ſpace of one day the Waters of the Abyſs ſhould run down from the moſt Inland places to the Sea, and afterwards returning through ways that were never yet opened by them, ſhould ſtrain themſelves through the Bowels of the Earth, and aſcend to the heads of their Rivers. But of Rivers we have ſaid enough, let us now proceed to the reſt.

We have in the third place a very ſtrange account of a Serpent that talked with *Eve*, and enticed her to miſtruſt God. I muſt confeſs

confeſs we have not yet known that this Beaſt could ever ſpeak, or utter any ſort of voice, beſides hiſſing. But what ſhall we think *Eve* knew of this buſineſs? If ſhe had taken it for a dumb Animal the very Speech of it would have ſo frightned her that ſhe would not have durſt to ſtay and enter into a Conference with it. If on the other ſide, the Serpent had from the beginning been capable of talking and haranguing, and only loſt his Speech for the crime of having by his ſeducements corrupted the Piety and Faith of *Eve*; certainly *Moſes* would have been far from paſſing over in ſilence this ſort of Puniſhment, and inſtead of that have mentioned ſo ſmall a Penalty as that of licking the duſt. But beſides all this, pray will you have the particular Species of Serpents, or all the Beaſts of the Field that were then in Paradiſe to have been indued with the faculty of ſpeaking like the Trees in *Dodona*'s Grove? If you ſay all, pray what offence had the reſt been guilty of, that they alſo muſt looſe the uſe of their Tongues? if only the Species of Serpents enjoyed this priviledg, how came it about that ſo vile an Animal, and by nature the moſt averſe and remote from Mankind, ſhould before all his other fellow Bruits deſerve to be Maſter of ſo great a favour and benefit as that of Speech?

Laſtly,

Laſtly, ſince all diſcourſing and arguing include the uſe of Reaſon, by this very thing you make the Serpent a Rational Creature. But I eaſily imagin thoſe who are great ſtickers; for the Literal Interpretation will ſolve this difficulty another way: For, ſay they, under the ſhape of this Serpent was hid the Devil, or an Evil Spirit, who uſing the Mouth and Organs of this Animal, ſpoke to the Woman as it were with an human voice. But what Teſtimony, with Authority, have they for this? The moſt literal reading of *Moſes*, which they ſo cloſely adhere to, does not expreſs any thing of it; for what elſe does he ſeem to ſay, but that he attributes the ſeducing of *Eve* to the natural craftineſs of the Serpent, and nothing elſe? For theſe are *Moſes*'s words: Now the Serpent was more cunning than any Beaſt of the Field that the Lord God had made: (Afterwards continues he) *The Serpent ſaid to the Woman, yea, hath God ſaid* ——. But beſides had *Eve* heard an Animal, by nature dumb, ſpeak through the means of ſome Evil Spirit, ſhe would inſtantly with horror have fled from the Monſter. When on the contrary ſhe very familiarly receved it; they diſcourſed and argued very amicably together, as tho nothing new or aſtoniſhing had happened; again, if you ſay, that all this proceded from the ignorance and weakneſs of a Woman, 'twould on the other ſide, have been but juſt, that ſome good Angels ſhould have

have ſuccoured a poor Ignorant weak Woman, thoſe Juſt Guardians of human affairs would not have permitted ſo unequal a conflict; for what if an Evil Spirit, crafty and knowing in buſineſs, had by his ſubtlety overreached a poor ſilly Woman, who had not as yet ſeen the Sun either riſe or ſet, who was but newly come of the Mould, and wholly unexperienced in all things? Certainly a Perſon who had ſo great a price ſet on her head, as the Salvation of all Mankind might well have deſerved a Guard of Angels: Ay, but perhaps (you'l ſay) the Woman ought to have taken care not to violate a Law eſtabliſhed upon pain of death: *The day you eat thereof, you ſhall ſurely die*, both you and yours; this was the Law. Die! what does that mean, ſays the poor ignorant Virgin, who as yet had not ſeen any thing dead, no not ſo much as a flower; nor had yet with her eyes or mind perceived the Image of death (*viz.*) Sleep or Night. But what you add concerning his Poſterity and their Puniſhment that is not at all expreſſed in the Law. Now no Laws are ever to be diſtorted, but eſpecially not thoſe that are pœnal. The puniſhment of the Serpent will alſo afford no inconſiderable queſtion if the Devil tranſacted the whole thing under the form of a Serpent; or if he compell'd the Serpent to do or ſuffer thoſe things, why did he pay for a crime committed by the Devil. Moreover as to the manner

ner and form of the puniſhment inflicted on the Serpent (*viz.*) that for the future he ſhould go creeping on his Belly, it is not eaſie to be explained what that means. Hardly any one will ſay that the Serpent did before walk upright, or after the manner of four-footed Beaſts; and if on the other ſide from the beginning he crept like our Modern Snakes, it may ſeem ridiculous to impoſe on this Creature as a Puniſhment for one ſingle Crime, a thing which by nature he ever had before. But let this ſuffice for the Woman and Serpent, let us now go on to the Trees.

I here underſtand thoſe two Trees which ſtood in the middle of the Garden, (*viz.*) the Tree of Life, and the Tree of the Knowledg of Good and Evil. The Tree of Life was (they'l tell you) ſo called, for that it would give Men a very long life. But by what follows in the ſame Relation we find that all our Forefathers before the Flood did without the help of this Tree attain to a very great Age. Beſides, if the Longævity or Immortality of Men had depended only upon one Tree, or its Fruit, what if *Adam* had not ſinned? how could his Poſterity, when they were diffuſed over the face of the whole Earth have been able to come and gather Fruit out of this Garden, or from this Tree? Or how could the product of one Tree have been enough for all Mankind?

As

As to the other Tree of the Knowledg of Good and Evil, it does not ſo plainly appear what was its vertue, or from whence it received that name: It ſeems by I know not what juice or other vertue, to have inſtilled into them a new ſence of ſhame and modeſty; or, as it is expreſſed of Nakedneſs, as though before the Fall they had been wholly void of baſhfulneſs in Venereal Pleaſures; yet now adays in things of that kind even the moſt innocent have ſome ſenſe of ſhame. I know not what Sr. *Auſtin* means, when he ſays, that in the firſt ſtate and innocence of Mankind, Women would have conceived and brought forth without violating their *Clauſtrum Virginale*, the ſeed being immitted, and the Off-ſpring coming forth through the Pores, as do Virgins Monthly Purgations, and that the whole Act of Generation would have been performed without any ſting or tranſport, juſt as one hand rubs another. If theſe things were taken exactly according to the Rules of Nature and Philoſophy they would be very difficult to ſolve. But God ſeems to intimate quite another Vertue in this Tree, when he ſays, *Behold Adam is become as one of us, knowing good and evil (viz.)* by the force and Vertue of the Fruit which he had eaten. Now certainly whatever heat or tranſport ariſes from a vicious, inordinate Motion, is ſo far from making us like God, that it on the contrary

trary renders us but the more diſſimular to him.

Having thus therefore ſpoken ſufficiently concerning the Trees, let us next proceed to the reſt: Now after the eating this Apple, Fig or whatever other Fruit it was, our Parents made themſelves Aprons: For, ſays the Text, they ſewed together Fig leaves, and therewith made themſelves Aprons. From whence you may deduce the Original of the Taylors Trade, but where had they Needles? And where their Thread that very firſt Day of their Creation? ſince the Thread-makers Art was not yet found out, nor yet the Art of Working in Iron. All which Queſtions may perhaps be thought a little too free, but the thing it ſelf requires us to deal freely, when we are ſeeking for naked Truth. When they had thus made themſelves Aprons, God gave them likewiſe Coats made of the Skins of Animals: But here again we run into other Difficulties, wherefore to ſoften the Thing, let us ſuppoſe an Angel to have been in the place of God, that 'twas an Angel who killed and flead the Animals, or pull'd off their Skins whilſt they were yet alive and Innocent. Notwithſtanding this too ſmells more of the Butcher or Executioner, than of an Angel. Beſides, through this Butchery ſome entire Species of Animals muſt neceſſarily have periſh'd; for 'tis not believed that from the beginning there were more than two of each kind created, and one alone, without another for its Conſort,

Conſort, could never have produced any Off-ſpring. After all this what follows? Why God expell'd our Parents thus cloath'd out of Paradiſe, and placed at the Entrance of the Garden, Cherubims with a great two-handed flaming Sword, that continually waved about the ſame, for fear leaſt either by open force or by ſtealth they might have repoſſeſt themſelves again of thoſe happy Manſions. Now is there any one of the Interpreters that will put an exact literal Conſtruction upon theſe Things? that will make Angels to have ſtood like Centinels, with drawn Swords before the Doors of the Garden, for I know not how many Ages, as Dragons are feign'd by the Poets? To have guarded the Apples of the *Heſperides*? But how long did this Angelical *Corps du Guard* laſt? To the Flood, I ſuppoſe, if not longer. So that you here ſuppoſe the Angels to have been for above Fifteen Hundred Years employed in keeping a Garden. *Sic vacat exiguis Rebus adeſſe Deos*? How much eaſier would it have been, in a place ſo well watered as Paradiſe, to have Fenced the Garden about with a River? which to *Adam* and *Eve*, who were as yet ignorant of the manner either of Building, or conducting Boats and Veſſels, would have been a more than ſufficent Obſtacle: But theſe, and other Things of this Nature, leaſt they ſhould be thought to ſavour of Malice, I had rather leave for others to reflect upon.

Thus

Thus have we in ſhort run over the chief Heads of the Hiſtory of Paradiſe; the only thing now remaining to be conſider'd, is, in how ſhort a time all theſe things are ſaid to have been tranſacted, in one Days time, or perhaps, but in half a Day. Divines ſuppoſe *Adam* to have conſummated his Marriage with *Eve* the firſt Night; afterwards, ſay they, if *Eve*, whilſt ſhe was yet Innocent, had conceived her firſt Born, ſhe would have likewiſe brought him forth Innocent and Free from all blemiſh of Sin: Whence alſo his whole Progeny, in Relation to the Father's ſide, would have continued unſpotted with it. But there is none of that ſort of Progeny unſpotted, or ſo much as half pure, we are all of us tainted with the ſame Blemiſh, have all the ſame Diſeaſe. Wherefore we muſt neceſſarily ſuppoſe all theſe Things to have been done on the ſixth Day of the Creation, before their lying together, or the Embraces of their Nuptial Bed. How many therefore, and how great Things muſt we heap on this one Day! We will, if you pleaſe, briefly run them over. That Day did God create all manner of Cattle, all manner of wild Beaſts, and all ſorts of creeping Things: Laſtly, he created *Adam*; and when he had created all theſe things, he brought each kind of Animal before *Adam*, that to every one of them he might give a name according to their ſeveral Faculties. As for me, what Language *Adam* could ſpeak the

firſt

firſt Hour or Day of his Nativity, I am wholly ignorant of; but however it be, ſince there are ſo many different Ranks and Families of Animals, to weigh and conſider well the Nature of each, and afterwards to give them a name adapted to it, ſeems a Task that requires no ſmall time. Again, when all this work was in ſome manner finiſhed, God caſt *Adam* into a deep ſleep, and whilſt he was ſnoring, took from him a Rib out of which he built a Woman: The ſame Day theſe new born Man and Woman commit Matrimony without Contract, or the formal Preliminaries of Wooing. And that very ſame Day Miſtreſs Bride being, to I know not what intent, pleaſed to ramble among the Groves of the Garden, happened to meet with the Serpent: This Serpent begins a Diſcourſe with her; they argue on one ſide and t'other, about a certain Tree and eating, or not eating a certain Fruit. She at length overcome by his Reaſons, or ſeducing Expreſſions, eats of this Fruit; and not only that, but carries it to her Husband, who likewiſe eat of it. Upon this there happens a great alteration, they caſt their Eyes on each other's Nakedneſs, are aſhamed, and make themſelves Aprons of Fig-leaves ſew'd together.

When things being in this Poſture, God Almighty in the Evening deſcends into the Garden; they conſcious of their own Guilt fly away, and abſcond themſelves among the Trees

and

and ſhady Coverts; but all in vain; for God Summons the Criminals, they appear, and upon Examination of the whole Cauſe, he Decrees to the Man, Woman and Serpent the ſeveral Puniſhments they had merited. Laſtly, to fulfil all parts of the Puniſhment, our Parents are caſt out of Paradice, and ſent into Exile: When ſeveral Angels being placed at all the Avenues of the Garden, they are forced to wander alone among the Woods, and take up their Lodging among the Wild Beaſts. All which things we read to have been done within the ſmall ſpace of one day; truly a very conſiderable and very numerous piece of buſineſs. But I cannot bear to ſee, that in ſo ſhort time all Things were inverted and put into a total Diſorder; and that the whole Nature which had but juſt now been compoſed and poliſhed, ſhould, before the firſt time of the Suns ſetting, fall to Ruin and Confuſion: In the Morning God ſaid all things were good; and in the Evening of the ſame Day, all things are accurſed. Alas! how fleeting and unconſtant is the Glory of Things created! A work that was ſix days e'er it could be elaborate and brought to perfection, and that by an Omnipotent Architect to be thus in as few Hours ruined by ſo vile a Beaſt. Now this is a faithful Account of Matter of Fact contain'd in the Hiſtory of Paradice and Creation of Mankind, as alſo of the time wherein each Part of the ſaid Hiſtory was produced: All which

which things when I revolve in my Mind, which is wholly unbyaſs'd and ready to comply on every ſide, where right Reaſon and the Love of Truth conduct me: I cannot be angry with thoſe of the Fathers and ancient Writers who have endeavoured to convert theſe things into Symbols, Parables or ways of diſcourſing adapted to the Vulgar. But am angry with *Celſus*, who calls this account an old Wive's Tale; upon which *Origen* tells him very well by way of anſwer, ὅτι μετὰ τροπολογίας ταῦτα εἴρηται, that theſe things were ſpoken in a figurative Sence. However *Celſus* himſelf does in what follows acknowledge that the faireſt Interpreters both among the *Jews* and *Chriſtians* were aſhamed of the literal Sence, and therefore accommodated them to Allegories. Hence you may ſee, that in the firſt Ages of the Chriſtian Church (at which time *Celſus* lived) as alſo among the *Jews* before Chriſt's Birth, the more candid Interpreters deviated from the literal Reading of *Moſes*'s Hiſtory. And really it ſeems a very cruel and very hard thing in this Reſpect that God ſhould be ſaid to have tormented, nay and ruined Mankind for ſo ſmall a Fault, and that too committed through the Levity of a Womans Mind. Wherefore ſome are of an Opinion (which I am not much averſe to) That *Moſes* laid ſo vaſt a Puniſhment on ſo ſmall a Crime, only to the end he might procure the greater Diffe-

rence and Authority to his own Laws, which often Decree with the ſtricteſt Severity things Frivolous, and in their own Nature, Indifferent. For who would not fear to violate the moſt petty, inconſiderable Precept that comes in the Name of God, if the eating of one Forbidden Apple could bring perdition to all Mankind? But upon theſe and the other Articles in *Moſes*'s Narration, let every one enjoy his own Sentiments, provided he do not deſtroy the Foundation.

Now by Foundation I here mean the Doctrine of the Temporal Riſe of Mankind, as well as of this Earth, the Degeneration of both; and that Mankind will be redeemed by the Seed of a Woman. In this blind State of Mortality we are all prone to Error; and among the Duties of Charity, 'tis not the leaſt for us to indulge and ſuccour one another when we are Erroneous. For my own part, I call God to Witneſs (who knows our moſt ſecret Thoughts) that in this or any other Writing I never propoſed more to my ſelf, than the promotion of Piety founded upon Truth. Neither do I in this Diſcourſe about Paradice, and the Origination of Mankind affirm any thing poſitively, but with Modeſty and Submiſſion, that I may the better Fathom the Judgments of Diſcreet, well-minded Perſons. What they will but with me conſider the Usage and Genius of the Primitive Ages, more eſpecially

eſpecially among the Oriental Nations (whoſe Cuſtom it was to deliver their Decrees and Doctrines by Symbols, Similitudes and Parables) if they do not concur with, will yet at leaſt not be prejudiced againſt thoſe who explain ancient Things after this manner.

CHAP. VIII.

Concerning the Original of Things, as they are Expounded in the Firſt Chapter of Geneſis ; *together with the Manner of Interpreting* Moſes's Hexaemeron, *that is to ſay, his Account of the Creation performed in Six Days.*

WHAT Reflections we have made in the foregoing Chapter about the Originals of Things, chiefly reſpect Mankind, as alſo their Cauſes and primary State. But the Original of Things inanimate and the Univerſe, as *Moſes* deſcribes it in the Firſt Chapter of *Geneſis*, ſeems no leſs contrary to the Theory of the Earth. This Account therefore which *Moſes* gives us of the World, being much ancienter than all thoſe others before mentioned, we ought to examin it the more diligently, and ſo to compoſe or dilute theſe Controverſies by a friendly Interpretation, that Truth (which is alike neceſſary to each of them) may at the ſame time be inviolably preſerved.

The *Hexaemeron* and Theory ('tis true) agree in their firſt Foundation of Things: For as they both ſuppoſe the Chaos to have been the matter out of which the World was Built.

So

So they likewiſe agree in their general Order, making the World to have been firſt inanimate, and then afterwards animated. But, as to the reſt, for Example, the Form an Limits of the created World, as alſo the manner, time and other Things, they do not a little differ; all which we muſt now at large examin.

'Tis *Firſt*, therefore to be obſerved, what Form and what Limits of the World the *Hexaemeron* has propoſed to its ſelf. Now 'tis well known, that betwixt the Learned and the Vulgar there are two different Syſtems of the World, whereof one ſuppoſes the Sun to be the Center, and t'other the Earth. Quære then upon which of theſe two Syſtems is *Moſes*'s *Hexaemeron* grounded? 'Tis moſt certain, that *Moſes* has begun his Work from the Earth, as the Baſis or Foundation of the whole Machine; and that he did not produce the Sun (according to what he ſays) till the 4th Day, at which time the Structure of the Earth and Sea was already finiſh'd. The Sun was not therefore the Center of the whole Work, ſince it had no Being till the work was half brought to Perfection. Beſides, as well the Sun as the reſt of the heavenly Bodies, are by *Moſes* repreſented to have been created meerly for the uſe of the Earth, and in a manner but as ſo many ſervile Bodies, whoſe only buſineſs was to meaſure out to us the Days, Years and the reſt of the ſeveral Seaſon. But according to

the other Hypotheſis, the Sun and fixed Stars are not only very great, but alſo very noble Bodies; bearing the firſt Rank amongſt the various Parts of the Univerſe, and being as it were the Foundations of that prodigious Maſs. 'Tis evident therefore from both theſe Reaſons, that *Moſes* has followed the popular Syſtem; that which moſt pleaſes the People, which moſt flatters our Senſes, is believed and comprehended, or at leaſt ſeems to be comprehended by the greater number: And in ſo doing he rightly conſulted the public Safety; when neglecting Philoſophy, he adhered to more ſerious Counſels and Reaſons of greater weight.

Secondly, Since it is evident that the Earth was the Center of this *Moſaic* Chaos, 'tis next to be enquired after, how far upwards this blind and confuſed Maſs did reach. The *Hexaemeron* truly ſeems to ſuppoſe that this Chaos filled and poſſeſſed the whole Univerſe how great ſoever, together with all the Heavens and Regions of the Air, which way ſoever they were diffuſed; as alſo that the brighteſt and moſt reſplendent Stars were compoſed of this chaotic Matter, neither that there were any before the Birth and Creation of this our Earth. Which is what the very Letter of the *Hexaemeron* ſeems to import, and abſolutely contradictory to the Nature of Things, as well as to all Philoſophical Reaſons. 'Tis moſt certain that the fixed Stars are fiery Bodies; that they

do

do not all reſt upon the ſame Superficies; being ſome more remote from the Earth, and more profoundly immers'd in the Heavens, than others; and that upon this ſcore there can be no common Center aſſigned to all of them at leaſt, to believe our modern Earth (a blind and ſordid particle of the Univerſe, inferiour to each of the fixed Stars, as well in bulk as in dignity) to be the Heart, the moſt noble and moſt vital Part of ſo vaſt a Body, is altogether irrational and repugnant to the Nature of Things. I ſpeak it again with Indignation, that to ſay, or almoſt to think, that this Earth, the Dregs, the meer Scum of Nature, is the Supream Head of all Things, and as it were the firſt born Product of the whole Creation cannot be without an Abuſe and Scandal, as well to the Operator as to the Work. Beſides if that earthyly Chaos had been extended throughout the vaſt Face of the Univerſe, and that this Earth were the only Center in which all the groſſer parts convened, the ſame Earth or middle Body, being the common Recepticle of all the groſſer Parts, would have grown up to a bulk infinitely bigger, than this little Earth of ours. For that the ſublunary Chaos (or which reaches to the Moon) is of it ſelf ſufficient to make up this Earth; and if to this you add the whole viſible Heaven, and thoſe ſpaces above the Heavens, which are not obvious to our Senſes, but ſurpaſs all our imagination: Neither the

Sun nor any visible Body is of so great a magnitude as would be that Body composed in the midst of the Chaos. Moreover, that as well the corporeal as the incorporeal World is more ancient than this inhabitable Earth, may in some measure be proved out of Ecclesiastical Authors, if we strictly examin the thing.

Many Fathers of the Christian Church were of Opinion, that before the Earth or *Mosaic* World, there had been Angels for many Ages unknown to us; and some also mention the same of the highest Heaven or Firmament. But this Opinion of the Angels is a thing more positively asserted, and by a greater number. Not to speak of *Origen*, St. *Basilius* says this in his *Hexaemeron*; *Chrysostom.* πρὸς τὸς σκανδαλιζομένους cap. 7. πολλῷ παύτης τ κτίσεως πρεσβύτεροι, &c. *Gregorius Nazianzenus Orat.* 38. and in other Places. *Johannes Damascenus, l.* 2. *Orth. Fid. cap.* 3. *Joh. Philoponus, de Creatione mundi, lib.* 1. *cap.* 10. *ult. Olympiodorus* upon *Job.* 38. and others of the *Greeks* have taught the same; not a few also of the *Latins* have been of this Opinion. *Hilarius, l.* 12. *de Trin.* St. *Jerom, Ambrosius* (in *Hexam. l.* 1. *c.* 5.) *Isidorus Hispalensis, Beda* and others. Accordingly these are St. *Jerom*'s own words upon the subject —— *Our World has not yet seen Six Thousand Years; and what Eternities, what vast Tracts of Time, what inexhaustible Fountains of Ages ought we to suppose have been before it, in which the Angels, Thrones, Powers and other Vertues have served*

ſerved God. In the Book *de Trinitate* (whether it was written by *Novatian* or *Tertullian*) as well the Angelical World as the ſpaces above the Firmament, are ſaid to have been made before the *Moſaical* World, in theſe words; *Although in the higher Regions* (viz.) *thoſe above the Firmament it ſelf he did before inſtitute Angels, ſpiritual Vertues, Thrones and Powers, as alſo create many other vaſt Tracts of the Heavens,* &c. *Inſomuch that this World appears rather to be the laſt Work of God, than his ſole and only one.* To which Paſſage adds *Damelius.* —— Novatian *was not only of this Opinion, but alſo St.* Jerom *together with all the* Greeks, *that the Angels were ſooner inſtituted,* (viz.) *before any part of the Creation of our preſent World.* Laſtly, *Caſſian* tells us, *That this was the common Opinion of the Catholics in his time*; which was at the beginning of the fifth Age: *Whereof* (ſays he) *none of the Faithful doubt.* And having more fully explained this generally received Opinion, he afterwards adds; *'Tis moſt certain and undoubted, that God created all thoſe Celeſtial Powers before that Temporal beginning of the Creation.* But to remove all doubt concerning the preexiſtence of Angels, we have the very words which the Lord himſelf ſpake to *Job*, chap. 38. 4, &c. *Where were thou when I laid the Foundations of the Earth: when the morning Stars ſang my praiſes, and all the Sons of God ſhouted for joy?* Whereupon ſays *Olympiodorus*, ἀπὸ τούτου δῆλον, ὅτι πρῶτοι εἰσὶ Ἄγγελοι τοῦ κόσμου γεγένηται 'Tis plain from this

Paſſage, that in the Creation of the World the Angels were firſt made. Foraſmuch as theſe words certainly imploy that before the Foundations of the Earth were laid, there were Angels, and that they ſang praiſes to God at the firſt Building of our World. Likewiſe if you take the Morning Stars according to the very Letter, it is moſt certain that the Stars and Heavens alſo preceded the Foundation of our Earth.

Beſides, St. *Jerom* makes intellectual Beings pre-exiſtent to the World by thoſe Paſſages of Scripture, where ſomething is ſaid to have been done, πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων, *Tit.* 1. 2. 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. or πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων, 1 *Cor.* 2. 7. *before the World began.* Nor is there leſs included in this Expreſſion, πρὸ καταβολῆς τοῦ κόσμου, 1 *Pet.* 1. 20. *Epheſ.* 1. 4. *John* 17. 5. and 24. *Before the Foundations of the World were laid.* Which does not denote a bare Eternity, but the Periods and Foundation of this World. Before both which did exiſt the Soul of the Meſſias, and the Myſtery of the Chriſtian Oeconomy. But to return again to the Angels.

Laſtly, We can evince the ſame by the Sacred Oracles and Authority of the Fathers, as well as by Reaſon and Arguments. The Fall of the Angels was before the Creation of the World, therefore they were before created, and that for ſome Ages. For really 'tis not at all probable that the moſt excellent Creatures

tures were made of ſo frail a nature, as that on the very day of their birth they ſhould fall into evil and miſery; neither is it conſiſtent with the *Deus, Opt. Max.* the kind Father of all Intelligent Beings, to place the moſt noble part of his work in ſo ſlippery a ſtation, that no ſooner had their Maker taken his hand from off them, but they immediately fell head-long into deſtruction; damned to the utmoſt of torments, and a moſt diſmal Hell. Which being thus ſtated, let us paſs on from the Angels to the Corporeal World; wherein we are firſt to obſerve, That if the Angels had not any ways been united with matter, nor had from it received any pleaſure, or any ſort of perception, it could ſcarce have been poſſible that they ſhould have been wreſted from their habitations and firſt ſtate: For pray where were the places that theſe pre-exiſtent Angels did inhabit? *Baſilius* ſays, they dwelt in the Heavens and Light. Many of the Ancients did (as is well known) attribute to the Angels, Σωματα λεπτα, thin Bodies, and not groſs Terreſtrial ones like ours. And the ſecond *Nicene* Council would have this Doctrin propoſed out of the Book of *John* Biſhop of *Theſſalonica*, to be confirmed; theſe are the words: Concerning the Angels, Archangels, and their Powers, to which I alſo joyn our own ſouls: This is the opinion of the Catholic Church; that they are 'tis true intelligible, yet not wholly Incorporeal and Inviſible, as you *Gentiles* ſay, but endowed with a thin and

and Aerial or Fiery Body; as it is written, *Who makes his Angels Spirits, and those that minister unto him a flaming fire.* This we know to have been the opinion of many Holy Fathers, amongst whom are *Basilius*, Sirnamed the Great, St. *Athanasius*, *Methodius*, and those that follow them; not that they suppose Angels to be Bodies, but like human Souls to be invested with Bodies; yet not such as are moulded up of the same Clay, with our Modern ones, but thin and pure like Air or Fire: Of the same nature as those we shall one day have, when we come to be ἰσάγγελοι equall to the Angels.

Lastly, those who interpret that passage, *Gen.* 6. 2, *&c.* of the Angels joyning themselves with the Daughters of Men (which not a few of the Fathers and others do) must necessarily assert that the Angels have Bodies, proper and agreeable to their own nature, from all which we may conclude that together with the Angels some Cœlestial Matter did exist before the Earth. But of whatever kind this thin, subtle and lucid Matter was it could not exist by it self, and before the remaining part of the Mass of Matter. For all Matter was together, and at once produced out of Nothing. Neither may we conceive the action of the Creation as divided into parts and distant ages; whilst the rest of the Regions and Tracts of the World remained empty. For my part if

an

an Atom, or the ſmalleſt Particle of Matter exiſted before the *Moſaical* Epocha, I am of opinion that the whole Maſs of the Univerſe did the ſame; and by the ſame Rule, if that Angelical Matter, or Vehicle of the Angels preceded the beginning of the Earth, all Matter in general did (as the *Greek* Fathers argue) in ſome meaſure precede it; but its diſpoſition and order according to its different parts, ſcituations and forms have by the Decree of Providence been from time to time varied ſometimes after one manner, and ſometimes after another. Thus by the Authority of the Fathers we have hitherto treated of the pre-exiſtence of Angels and of Matter it ſelf, as it hath a connection with the Angels; let us now therefore return to the nature of things, and to the viſible World; for in the Corporeal we have as many Arguments to confirm the ſame antiquity of Matter; and to ſufficiently demonſtrate that the *Moſaical* Epocha of about ſix thouſand years, does not comprehend the Original of the whole Univerſe, but the Age of our preſent Earth, and the time ſince it was formed out of its Chaos. If we again conſider the *Phænomenaes* of the Heavens, and the Comp[illegible]ies of both erring and fixed Stars, we ſhall eaſily believe that ſo numerous a progeny, and which was worthy of a better Parent, could not be the off-ſpring of one Earthly Chaos; nor admit of their Ages

and

and Hiſtories being included within the limits of ſo ſmall a time, wherefore let us, if you pleaſe, call to mind a thing which is now no longer doubted of (*viz.*) that the Earth is a Planet; and that beſides the Earth there are many Planets of the ſame nature, as well as of a like matter and form. All which, 'tis probable, have had the ſame manner and principle of birth; that is, every one out of its own Chaos. Moreover, ſince the Creation of the Earth, we have not ſeen the birth of any one new Planet; for which reaſon certainly they are all either older than the Earth, or as old now. If you grant the former, 'tis all we deſire; and if you make them of the ſame age with the Earth, you muſt ſuppoſe as many Chaos's as there are Primary Planets ſince; for example, 'tis certain, that *Jupiter* who wheels about his own Satellites or Tendours, is a Center to himſelf, and does not any ways depend on our Earth, as do none of the reſt, except it be the *Moon*. Again, the fixed Stars ſeem ancienter than the Planets, and to be each of them the Center of its own Orb or Vortex; as many Syſtems therefore muſt be conſtituted in the Heavens as there are fixed Stars; which being very great both as to number and bulk, would ſwallow up this little point of Earth, as it it were leſs than nothing; wherefore whoever has any favour for the Heavens, and is an unbiaſſed obſerver of God's Works, will not eaſi-

ly

ly conſent to have their Originals deduced from the Earth, or dependent on it.

Laſtly, 'tis probable that the Planets were formerly fixed, and that the Earth it ſelf ought to be numbred in the ſame rank, 'twill be no eaſie matter for you to ſolve the Originals of the Planets by any other Hypotheſis; at leaſt, not if they have fire in their Center, which 'tis very probable they have. Beſides we ſometimes ſee the face of the Sun overgrown with thick ſpots, and perceive him for ſome days pale, obſcure, and as it were in the pangs of death; but he that is ſick may die; and what happens to one may happen to others of the ſame kind (now all the fixed Stars are homogeneous) therefore the fixed Stars are periſhable. Now a fixed Star periſhes, and is extinguiſhed when being cruſted over with a thick ſhell of ſcurf which it cannot break through, it degenerates into an obſcure and opake body, ſuch as is a Planet. Finally, the new Stars that have of late years appeared in the Heavens, have not, 'tis probable, I mean in reſpect to their Originals, had any connection or communication with the Earth; neither have the Comets, which, although in ſome things they are dubious and hard to be explained, do to me ſeem nothing elſe, but (as one may ſay) the dead bodies of the fixed Stars, unburied, and not as yet compoſed to reſt, they like ſhadows wander up and down through the various Regions of the Heavens, till they have found out fit

places

places for their reſidence, which having pitched upon they ſtop their irregular courſe, and being turned into Planets move Circularly about ſome Star. Whereas, if according to another Hypotheſis, Comets are held to have been juſt the ſame from the beginning, they take ſuch vaſt Tours, make ſuch immenſe Circles and Periods, that no man can prove we ever ſaw the ſame Comet twice in one and the ſame part of its circuit. Theſe and the like *Phænomenaes* of the Heavens can hardly without uſing ſome violence to the Laws of Nature be reduced to an Epocha of ſix thouſand years. We ſhould much rather confeſs that our Earth had not the ſame Original, nor is of the ſame age with the whole Univerſe, whether Intellectual or Corporeal. Nor is it to be wondered at, that *Moſes* did not diſtinguiſh them, or treat of the Original of the Univerſe apart, from that of our Sublunary World; ſince the common people never diſtinguiſh theſe things, nor have any ſeparate Idæa of them. The greateſt part of Mankind eſteems the remaining part of nature, and of the Univerſe only as an Appendix of our World or Earth, worth nothing of it ſelf, but created meerly for our uſe and benefit. 'Twas therefore not without much reaſon, that our moſt wiſe Law giver left it to the Philoſophers as their buſineſs, that when human underſtanding was through age, uſe and obſervations come to a greater maturity, they might digeſt the

Works

Works of God into another Method adapted to the Divine perfections and nature of things. But enough of this Subject, let us now proceed to ſomething elſe.

Thirdly, *Moſes* in his *Hexaemeron* mentions a famous *Phænomena* whereof we have not any appearance, I mean his Waters above the Firmament, in the making or diſpoſing of which he tells us God ſpent one entire day; which is no leſs time than he imployed about the Sun, Moon and all the Hoſt of Heaven! 'Tis true, theſe Noble Bodies deſervedly claim to themſelves twentyfour Hours labour, but to an obſcure unknown thing we cannot but grudg ſo much work. Let us make a ſearch therefore after theſe inviſible Waters, let us enquire what are the places they now poſſeſs, or where they have formerly reſided. *Moſes* ſays, they were placed above the Firmament; but the Sun with the reſt of the Stars he mak s to be in the Firmament: Thus he places thoſe Waters above all the Stars, and the Starry Heaven, nevertheleſs of theſe and all things elſe he ſuppoſes the Earth to be the Center; but ſince the Waters are heavier than the Cœleſtial Matter, and than even the very air it ſelf, how is it poſſible for them to ſtay in the higheſt Regions, not being ſuſtained by any intermediate Bodies of a groſſer kind? St. *Auſtin* in this matter forbids us having recourſe to the Divine Omnipotence when in treating on the ſame ſubject he thus very gravely and much to the purpoſe admo-

admoniſheth us, neither let any one ſay, that according to the Almighty Power of God to whom all things are poſſible, we ought to believe that the Waters, thus heavy as we know and feel them to be, are diffuſed above the Heavenly Body in which are the Stars; for now we ought to examin by his Scriptures, how God has inſtituted the natures of things, not how he is pleaſed to operate according to his Miraculous Omnipotence; and this agrees with what he has more generally taught us elſewhere, God does after ſuch manner adminiſter all the things he has Created, that he ſuffers them to be exerciſed and governed by their own motions. Let your judgment then go according to theſe Rules. Beſides, ſuppoſe theſe I know not what kind of Waters had been above the higheſt Heavens, what had it ſignified to the people to know this Myſtery? 'tis remote from *Moſes*'s cuſtom, and what he propoſed to himſelf to relate in his *Hexaemeron* inviſible, abſtruſe things which were of no uſe when known; He in that only traces the *Phænomenaes* of the viſible World, which ſtrike upon the eyes of all people, and make them ſenſible that there muſt be a Creator; whereas thoſe things which are no way apparent, as they need no Author, ſo neither do they require any explanation. And therefore ſome have thought it proper to interpret theſe Waters above the Firmament, as it were watry Clouds, and to that end they eſtabliſh

bliſh two Firmaments, an upper and a lower; the former is that where the Stars reſide, the latter that wherein the Vapours, Clouds and Meteors roul about; that is to ſay, they call by the name of Firmament, the ſpace that lies between the Earth, and the middle Region of the air. But according to this ſolution, pray what did God Almighty create the ſecond day, a little extenſion or ſpace? The diſtance which is between us and the Clouds; but that diſtance did before exiſt, being not only extended to the middle Region of the Air, but even to the very higheſt Heaven; whether you ſuppoſe the newly Created Light, or the Chaos to have been interpoſed. What a buſineſs then is it to create diſtance; beſides to create diſtance the ſecond day which did *exit* the firſt? Neither is there according to this Propoſition any ſolid fence or encloſure admitted in the fluid Heavens. But that we may further confute this Interpretation, let us hear *Moſes*'s own words: *The ſecond day* (ſays he) *God ſaid let there be a Firmament in the midſt of the Waters, and let it divide the Waters from the Waters*; that is the Superiour from the Inferiour, theſe Waters therefore as well the one as the other did exiſt before this *Interaqueous* Firmament was made. For there can be no bound or ſeperation but of things that do already exiſt. Tell me then what or where were theſe Superiour Waters before this Seperation was made, they ſeem to have before been one continued Maſs, and after to have been

been by this partition divided into two different Stories. But before all this there were neither Rain nor Clouds; if therefore you will have these to be the Superiour Waters this does not answer *Moses*'s words. Finally, 'twould be preposterous to suppose Clouds before the Earth; or to imagin these coagulations of Vapours, which perish and are renewed each day, considerable enough to take up the sixth part of the Almighties vast Work. The thing in short comes to this; the vulgar do not comprehend the natural Generation of Rain by the condensation of Vapours, but fancies rain is sent down from Heaven by a Divine Impulse, or comes immediately from God, *Moses* to favour this opinion goes and makes a common Receptacle for the Waters above the Heavens; so that God by opening or shutting his Flood-gates might at his pleasure keep up or let down the Rain; this I take to have been the mind and intent of the Sacred Author as to his Super-cœlestial Waters. And this is the best way to keep up the dignity of *Moses*, if whenever he deviates from the Physical Truth, we suppose him to do it κατὰ συγκατάβασιν, by adapting his History of the Creation to the capacity and use of the common people. Thus also when he treats of light in the first day of the Creation, that *Phænomena* is equally uncapable of being explained by any Physical reason; but least God should seem to work three days in the dark, *Moses* thought it was convenient to produce

produce light at the beginning of the work. But what ſort of a light was it? A light without any ſource, without any original from whence it might be derived. Yet light, to argue Philoſophically, always flows from ſome Center wherein is the Heart and Principle of its Motion. Nevertheleſs in this Account of the Creation, Light is produced before any diſtinction of the Heavens into Orbs or *Vortex's*. Beſides, according to the literal reading, God ſeems to have reſted from his work in the Night time, as Men are uſed to do; but I do not ſee how another Hæmiſphere either Celeſtial or Terreſtrial could be perfected, if there was any intermiſſion of the work, and God acted only where there was light. But the Vulgar never regard theſe little Niceties, nor do they dream of Antipodes or another Hemiſphere; conceiving the World to be like a Tent, whoſe covering is Heaven, and foundation the ſurface of the Earth. Next comes the third Days Task, wherein the Original of the Ocean is deſcribed, ἀπέχνως καὶ ἀθεωρήτως, purely according to the Capacity of the Vulgar, in theſe words, *Let the Waters be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry Land appear.* Now the dry Land he called Earth, and the gathering together of the Waters he called Seas; this gathering together of the Waters to uncover the Face of the Earth, which lay hid under the Abyſs, could not be effected any more than two ways (*viz.*) either by

by an accumulation of the Waters in certain places, ſo as that others might remain empty; or elſe by hollowing the Earth, which was under the Abyſs, in certain places, ſo as that the Waters might ſubſide there. But that accumulation could not make the Channel of the Ocean, wherefore all the Interpreters ſay, it was made by a hollowing of the Earth, and that the Waters being drawn down, and aggregated there, the Earth was deprived of them in other places. They alſo tell you, that the Mountains were made of this work (*viz.*) with the Earth, which was dug out of this Channel of the Sea, and heaped up in diverſe places. Now what can be plainer than this Original of the Ocean and Mountains, provided you do not too much play the Critic, and forbear too nice a ſcrutiny: Theſe things therefore muſt have pleaſed and ſatisfied the People who do not trouble themſelves about niceties. But if any one has a Mind to make a more exact Enquiry into theſe Things, he may if he plaſes, conſult what is written on this Subject in *Theor. l.* 1. c. 8, 9. *and laſt*; in which laſt Chapter by various Reaſons and manifeſt Tokens, it is demonſtrated that neither the Channel of the Ocean, nor the firſt inhabitable dry Land, could proceed from this Original. But it would not be worth my while to repeat the ſame here, or to add any more upon this Subject.

So

So much for the firſt three Days of *Moſes*'s Creation, in which if our Author had paſſed by the firſt and ſecond Days Task (*viz.*) that glimmering Light and thoſe Waters above the Firmament; and had put his ninth verſe immediately after his ſecond, his World or inhabitable Orb had been never the more deficient: But becauſe he had reſolved (at leaſt as I ſuppoſe) to hold and conſecrate the ſeventh Day for a Sabbath, it was neceſſary for him to ſpin out his Creation to ſix Days: That with the remembrance of the Worlds being finiſhed, and after the Example of God's reſting from all manner of Work, the ſeventh Day might be for ever ſolemnly obſerved. But the Tasks of each of theſe days are extreamly unequal, the firſt days work would have been finiſhed in the twinkling of an Eye; and ſo in my Opinion the ſecond: Whereas the third days Task would have been a vaſt and tedious piece of Buſineſs. Firſt to cut out ſo large a Channel as is that of the Sea; then to draw off all the Waters that covered the Surface of the Earth, or rather to force them down into that Channel; I ſay force, ſince they would not fall down towards the Sea of their own accord, there being as yet no Channels to convey the Rivers, nor Deſcents of the Earth to carry them down in thoſe places where the new Mountains or heaps of Earth newly dug up were fixed, the Waters would be thrown off, and the ſame proportion of them fall

down

down into the Pit of the Sea: But in all other places if no violence were uſed to them, they would remain unmoveable upon the Face of the Earth. However, although you ſuppoſe them to have run down with the ſame rapidity as Rivers do. Yet from ſome of the moſt Inland Places, 'twould be ſeveral Days Journey to the Sea. The fourth days Task ſeems no leſs laborious (*viz.*) the Sun, Moon and Stars: Good God, how many and vaſt Bodies did that one day produce and perfect! Even in the making each of the Planets there ought to be ſix Days imploy'd, as well as about this of ours, they being of the ſame Form (and as we have Reaſon to believe) their Ornaments and Equipage not very unlike: Beſides, according to the order of Things in the Creation, they being terreſtrial Bodies, ought all to have been thrown into the third days work; eſpecially the Moon, which could ſcarce be torn from its Center the Earth, and transferred into another Glaſs. But *Moſes* follows the Philoſophy of the Vulgar, and joyns the Moon with the Sun, as though they were of like Nature and Magnitude. Laſtly, the fifth and ſixth Days Tasks conſiſted of great variety: In theſe two days were built the Bodies of all the Birds, all the Fiſhes and all the Beaſts, both great and ſmall that were produced out of the Earth and Waters. Now adays the Bodies of Animals arrive more ſlowly at perfection; nor do I wonder at it, ſince they are ſo artificially compoſed. But

ſeeing the Bodies of Animals even to the ſmalleſt are of ſo exquiſite a Form and Compoſition, I ſhall never be induced to believe that the Earth, the common Mother of all things, was from the beginning of the World, as ruinous an ill ſhapen Maſs as now it is. But this by the by.

St. *Auſtin* would have all thoſe Things that are ſaid to be the work of ſix Days, to have been created in one Moment; although *Moſes* divided them into Claſſes and different Times that he might the better help the imagination of the People, to comprehend the firſt Originals of Things. God Almighty did in my Opinion create out of nothing in one moment, and by one individual act, all Subſtance, whether intellectual or corporeal. Nor did St. *Auſtin* in that come wide of the mark.

But here is not (in the reality of the thing) ſpoken of Subſtance in general, but only of the terreſtrial World; and not of its Creation, but its Formation. As for the Creation of all Things out of nothing, or out of no preexiſtent Matter, 'tis what cannot be doubted, as alſo that they were not from Eternity; (for we cannot form to our ſelves any Idea of a thing created from Eternity) but to preſcribe the divine Creation ſo ſhort an *Epocha*, as the limits of Six Thouſand Years, 'tis what I never durſt. I had rather leave that together with ſeveral other Things amongſt the hidden ſecrets of God.

Now these short Annotations upon the Account *Moses* gives us of the first Creation of Things, seems to imply that it was not this Sacred Author's design to represent the beginning of the World, exactly according to the Physical Truth (which would have been of no use to the common People who were uncapable of being made Philosophers) but to expound the first Originals of Things after such a method as might breed in the Minds of Men Piety, and a worshipping of the true God. And forasmuch as all the ancient Nations (*viz.*) the *Chaldæans*, *Phœnicians*, *Ægyptians*, &c. had each of them their several Accounts of the Creation of the World, placed as an introduction before their Histories or Systems of Divinity; so *Moses* in like manner being to write Laws and Institutions for the *Israelites*, thought it convenient also to prefix, as an introductory Preface, an Account not only of the Original of his own Nation, but even of the whole World. However, whereas the Heathens Accounts of the Creation were frequently stuffed with Fables, and I know not how many Gods and Goddesses, to the very great Corruption of Religion, he laying aside all those Fooleries has handled this Subject with a great deal of Purity and Innocence. When that he might tear up the very Roots of Idolatry, he represented the Heavens, Sun, Moon and Stars, which were the chief Deities of other Nations, not as eternal or created on their own account,

but

but as ſubſervient to this ſublunary World, as well as to the uſe of Mankind.

This to me ſeems the Scope of our Holy Writer; but if we ſeek only after pure naked Truth, and a phyſical Theory, we muſt go quite upon another Foundation; that is, we muſt (if I am not miſtaken) ſuppoſe the World, which began near upon ſix Thouſand Years ago; to have been no other than the ſublunary Orb, or our Earth together with its Sky; and that Chaos from whence it aroſe, not to have been univerſal or diffuſed over the vaſt ſpaces of the Heavens, but contained within the aforeſaid bounds, which are whatever is below the Moon. Likewiſe the Primitive Earth did not ariſe out of that Chaos in the ſame Form as *Moſes* had repreſented it: For his Deſcription of it was juſt according to what the People had before their Eyes, which was the *Poſt diluvian* and modern one; nor could he without a great many far fetched obſcure terms, and a long Chain of Arguments, have aſcended to its firſt Form, and have brought the Thread of both down to his own Times. In ſhort, neither the Sun nor Stars were compoſed out of this terreſtrial Chaos; but *Moſes* having made Man to be the Head and under God the ſupream Lord of all things, he repreſented the whole Univerſe as it were created and compiled purely for his ſake. This to me ſeems the Reaſon of both the phyſical and ethical Account of the Creation, for ſo I

call the *Moſaical* Relation, ſince it ſeems not to have been Inſtituted ſo much φυσικῶς as ἠθικῶς. In the mean time, if to other Peoples Optics this appears in a different view, I do not deſire to trouble or diſturb any one in their Opinion. Let every one pleaſe and hug himſelf in his own. But we are all bound to make uſe of that Portion of Reaſon God Almighty has diſtributed to each of us, till we have ſome more clear Light to illuminate us from Above.

AN

AN APPENDIX

Concerning the Modern *BRACHMINS* IN THE INDIES,

Together with their generally received Opinions.

HAving already ſpoken of the Modern *Brachmins* in the *Indies* (whom, beſides the near reſemblance of their Studies and Cuſtoms, we have ſeveral other Arguments to ſhow they are deſcended from the ancient Race) I think it may be neither impertinent nor unpleaſant to add ſome few Words here by way of Appendix, about their Opinions,

concerning the Originals and Revolutions of Things; which Opinions are, 'tis true, neglected by moſt People, becauſe they are delivered in a mythological way; and that Truth is very much clouded with Fables.

Under the name of *Indies*, we here comprehend, beſides the *Chineze* Empire, and Kingdom of *Indoſtan*, or Dominion of the Great *Mogul*; the Kingdoms of *Siam*, of the *Malabars*, of *Cochinchina*, of *Coromandel*, and whatever others are known to us in the *Eaſt*, that have in ſome meaſure ſhaken off their Barbarity. Now in each of theſe are a certain ſort of Philoſophers or Divines, and in the Kingdoms of *Indoſtan*, *Siam* and the other adjacent Parts, there are ſome who ſeem to be the Progeny of the ancient *Brachmins*, being different and diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of the People by their Manner and Way of Living, as well as by a Doctrin and Language wholly peculiar to themſelves. They have a certain *Cabala*, or Body of Learning, which they receive by Tradition from one to the other. Now this Body of Learning does not treat of each little Point or Nicety in Philoſophy, as our modern Philoſophers uſed to do; but like the natural Theology of the Ancients, it treats of God, of the World, of the Beginning and Ending of Things, of the Periods of the World, of the Primitive State of Nature, together with its repeated Renovations. All which Opinions are by ſome more

more plainly, by others more obſcurely and fabulouſly, delivered; but that they were of old ſpread amongſt theſe Nations, is plain from ſeveral Footſteps of them at this day remaining. For a Specimen whereof, we will give you ſome ſhort Remarks out of our late Voyages, upon ſeveral Heads of this now barbarous Theology, or Philoſophy: Nor is it of Moment with what Kingdom or Country we begin.

The Mogul's Kingdom call'd *Indſtan* is extreamly large, and has been viſited by ſeveral *Europeans*, whoſe Credit and Authority are ſufficient to make them be believed. There are in this Kingdom, beſides *Mahometans*, thoſe they call *Gentiles* or *Pagans*; among which *Gentiles* is a certain Tribe or Order of Men, who bear the Title, and perform the Offices of Sages, Prieſts or Philoſophers. They have a Language peculiar to themſelves, which they call Hanſcrit, or the pure Tongue; in this Language they have ſome very ancient Books, which they call Sacred, and ſay were given by God to the Great Prophet *Brahma*; as formerly the Law of the *Iſraelites* was to *Moſes*. *Athan Kircher* gives you an Alphabet of this *Brachmin*'s Language, written by the Hand of Father *Henry Roth*, who for ſeveral Years in the *Indies* apply'd himſelf to the Learning of *Brachmins*. And in this they not only write and conceal their Divinity, but alſo their Opinions in Philoſophy of all Kinds:

beſides the μεσεμψύχωσις, and the ὑπερεμψύχωσις, which are Opinions of a very ancient Date. They likewiſe Philoſophize after the manner of the Ancients, upon the Creation of the Univerſe, together with its End and Deſtruction; for they explain theſe Things by the Efflux or Emanation of all things from God, and by their Reflux or Reſtoration into him again: But this they propound in a Cabaliſtical Mythological way. For they feign a certain immenſe Spider to be the firſt Cauſe of all Things, and that ſhe, with the Matter ſhe exhauſted out of her own Bowels, ſpun the Web of this whole Univerſe, and then diſpoſed of it with a moſt wonderful Art: whilſt ſhe her ſelf in the mean time ſitting on the Top of her Work, feels, rules and governs the Motion of each part. At laſt, when ſhe has ſufficiently pleas'd and diverted her ſelf in adorning and contemplating her own Web, ſhe retracts the Threads ſhe had unfolded, and ſwallows them up again into her ſelf; whereby the whole Nature of Things created vaniſhes into nothing.

After this manner our modern *Brachmins* repreſent the Birth, Order and Periſhing of the World. Nor does this much differ from the Opinions of the Ancients we have above mentioned (*lib.* 1. *cap.* 7. *page* 63, 64, *&c.*) provided, that taking off the fabulous Shell, we go to the Kernel. If you have leiſure to read a larger Account of the *Indoſtan Gentiles*,

'tis

'tis what you may find in *Henry Lord*, *F. Bernier*, and other Travellers, who have more diligently enquired into their Literature.

In the Kingdom of *Siam*, which Borders upon the Empire of the *Mogul*, there is the same Progeny of the *Brachmins*. *Guido Tachard*, one of the Jesuits Society, who waited upon the *French* Ambassador to the King of *Siam*, has given us this Account of their Philosophy or Theology. They say, That the first Men were of greater Stature, and longer Liv'd than we now adays are; as also, that they lived many Ages free from Distempers. That this Modern Earth, parched with a long Heat, will at length be consumed by Fire, the Ocean being dried up, the Mountains melted, and the whole Surface of the Earth being made level. This I find in our aforesaid Author, with more of the same in others; all which a late Poet has compiled and facetiously explained in these Versicles.

Stolidus Regni Mysta Siami,
Octoginta dat perituro
Sæcula mundo. Tunc qui tantum
Jam fuerit uno fervidus Oculo,
Septem pandet lumina Phœbus,
Queis æquoreas ebibet undas.
Queis immensum vindice flammâ
Destruet Orbem. Sed duo calidis
Quæ restabunt tecta favillis

Binos homines ova creabunt.
Qui fœcunda ſemine cultum
Iterum poterunt reddere mundum.
Quem non ſalſis Neptunus aquis,
Alluet unquàm, tantum rigui
Undique fontes, Dulceſque lacus,
Irrorabunt molliter herbas.
Et perpetuo verè Beatos
Spargent variis floribus agros.

The *Siameſe Brachmins* not only ſay, that this modern Earth muſt periſh, and that by Fire; but even that out of its aſhes a new Earth muſt ariſe; and, without a Sea, that is to ſay, ſuch a one, as St. *John* the Prophet ſaw, *Apoc.* 21. 1. and without the yearly Viciſſitudes of the Seaſons, being bleſt with a perpetual Spring; ſuch another Earth as we have deſcribed in the Fourth Book of our *Theory*, Cap. 2. Tis really a moſt wonderful thing that a Nation half barbarous ſhould have retained theſe Opinions from the very times of *Noah*: for they could not have arrived to a Knowledge of theſe things any other way, than by Tradition; nor could this Tradition flow from any other Spring, than *Noah*, and the Antediluvian Sages. But out of what Author or *Siames's* Traveller the Poet has taken theſe Things, I have not yet been able to learn. Moreover the Kingdom of *Choromandel*, on the Southren Coaſt of the *Indies*, has its *Brachmins*: whoſe Manners and Doctrine have been with

no

no ſmall Diligence enquired into by *Abraham Rogers*, who wrote the Book called —— *Janua aperta ad Arcana Gentiliſmi.* Having Himſelf lived many years there. Now they affirm that there are ſeveral Worlds which do at one and the ſame time exiſt in divers Regions of the Univerſe: and that there are ſeveral ſucceſſive ones; for that the ſame World is deſtroyed and renewed again according to certain Periods of Time. They ſay alſo that our Terreſtrial World began by a certain Golden Age, and will periſh by Fire. Laſtly, they retain the Doctrin of the *Ovum Mundanum* comparing the World to an Egg; as did the ancients both *Greeks* and *Barbarians*. Finally, to the Kingdom of *Choromandel* is Contiguous that of the *Malabers*; where Father *Robert Nobilius*, Founder (as tis ſaid) of the *Maudarian Miſſion*, has ſpent no ſmall part of his life; learned as well in the vulgar *Indian* Language, as in that of the *Branchmins*; then he is ſaid to have written a great deal concerning the *Theory* of the *Brachmin*, but I know not to what language: for I have not yet happened to light upon any of his writings; neither have I any Accounts of this or the reſt of the Countrys of the *Indies* to be depended upon, to furniſh me with their Opinions, either from eye or ear witneſſes.

We have likewiſe before mentioned the *Chineſe*, a People of great Antiquity, but among the Ancients unknown, as to matter

of

of Learning, they have this in Common with the reſt of the Orientals, that they compare the World to an Egg, and will have it to be born of one. In like manner they ſay, their firſt Man, whom they call *Puoncuus*, was born of an Egg; whether you will ſuppoſe, that by it, they mean the *Chaos* or the Primitive Earth; and altho they do not ſeem to have derived their Philoſophy or Hiſtory from the *Brachmins* yet they ſet ſo great a value on their Letters, and ſecret Alphabet, that as things ſacred, and of a very great Antiquity, they uſe to inſcribe them on their Idols. As for the *Mahometans*, who are ſpread at large over the Eaſt under ſeveral different Dominions, I paſs by them, as men of an upſtart, ignorant kind what an *Egyptian* Prieſt formerly told —— *Solon* (*You* Greeks, *always Boys*; *not one of the* Greeks *ever comes to be Old*) May changing names, be much more properly ſaid to them. Nor does the *Egyptian* give an ill reaſon for what he ſays ——" Your are young in your " Minds; for in them is no tenent of the " Ancients, that comes by ancient Tradition: you retain no Learning that is grey " with old Age. Theſe things exactly ſquare with the *Mahometans*, whereſoever they are diſperſed, they retain nothing of Ancient Wiſdom; for the Ambition of extending their Dominions, has taken from them all manner of Love or Deſire of Learning.

Even

Even in *Perſia* it ſelf, where formerly flouriſhed the Myſtical Philoſophy of the great *Zoroaſter*, and the *Magi*, at this day remains nothing worth taking notice of. The aforementioned *Henry Lord* relates, that when the *Saracens* overran all *Perſia*, having beaten and ſlain the King *Jezdegird* about the Year of our Lord 628. Some of the *Perſians* who could not bear the yoak of a new Slavery and new Religion, transported themſelves and their effects by Sea into *India*: And that having ſworn Allegiance to the *Indian* Kings, they each of them freely exerciſed their own Religion, and ancient way of living. The ſame Author relates ſome opinions Generally received by theſe *Perſians* transplanted into *India*, concerning the Original Age, and End of the World: But they are ſo ſtuffed with Fables, that they hardly ſeem worth while to repeat. This muſt be obſerved in General, of the Modern *Pagans*, that there are (its true) now remaining amongſt them ſome *Footſteps* of the moſt ancient Tenents, which come to them by Tradition from their Anceſtours, but quite overwhelmed with *Traſh* and *Filthineſs*, being for the moſt part clogg'd with fabulous Additions, even to the degree of being nauſeous; inſomuch that when you come to manly Arguments, they are of no manner of Validity. I cannot but pitty the Eaſtern World, that the place which was the firſt Habitation of wiſe men, and one day a moſt

flouriſhing

flouriſhing *Emporium* for Learning ſhould for ſome ages paſt have been changed into a wretched Barbarity.

Tantæne Animis cœleſtibus iræ.

" I pray God grant that we may not " undergo the ſame Viciſſitude, and that in " his Anger he may not withdraw that " Light we now enjoy in the Weſt, but that " it may be more and more diffuſed on all " ſides, till the Knowledge of God ſhall " have filled the Earth, as the Waters fill " the Sea.

To

To the moſt Ingenuous and Learned Dr. Sydnham *at his Houſe near the* Peſtle *and* Mortar *in the* Pall Mall.

SIR,

THE laſt time I had the happineſs of your Company, it was your Requeſt that I would help you to a ſight of the Deiſts Arguments, which I told you, I had ſometimes by me, but then had lent them out, they are now return'd me again, and according to my promiſe I have herewith ſent them to you. Whereby, you'l only fmd, that human Reaſon like a Pitcher with two Ears, may be taken on either ſide; However, undoubtedly in our Travails to the other World the common Road is the ſafeſt; and tho Deiſm is a good manuring of a mans Conſcience, yet certainly if ſowed with Chriſtianity it will produce the moſt profitable Crop. Pardon the haſt of

SIR,

Rolleſton, May 14*th*. 1686.

Your moſt obliged Friend and Faithful Servant,

C. BLOUNT.

A Summary Account OF THE *DEISTS* RELIGION.

CHAP. I.

The Deists Opinion of God.

WHatsover is Adorable, Amiable and Imitable by Mankind, is in one Supream infinite and perfect Being, *Satis est nobis Deus unus.*

CHAP. II.

Concerning the manner of Worshipping God.

FIrst, Negatively; it is not to be by an Image for the first Being is not sensible, but intelligible: *Pinge sonum*; puts [illegible] impossibility

poſſibility no more can an infinite mind be repreſented in matter.

Secondly, Nor by Sacrifice; for *ſponſio non valet ut alter pro altero puniatur*; However no ſuch *ſponſio* can be made with a bruit Creature; nor if God loves himſelf, as he is the higheſt Good can any External Rite, or Worſhip reinſtate the Creature, after ſin in his favour, but only repentance, and obedience, for the future; ending in an Aſſimulation to himſelf, as he is the higheſt Good, and this is the firſt error in all Particular Religions; that external things or bare opinions of the mind, can after ſin propitiate God; hereby particular Legiſlators have endeared themſelves, and flattered their Proſelytes into good opinions of them, and mankind willingly ſubmitted to the cheat; *Enim facilius eſt ſuperſtitioſè, quam juſtè vivere.*

Thirdly, Not by a Mediator; for, firſt it is unneceſſary; *Miſerecordia Dei* being *ſufficiens juſtitiæ ſuæ.* 2*ly*, God muſt appoint this Mediator, and ſo was really reconciled to the World before. And 3*ly*, a Mediator derogates from the infinite mercy of God, equally as an Image doth from his *Spiritualitie* and *Infinitie.*

Secondly, Poſitively, by an inviolable adherence in our lives to all the things φυσει δικαια, by an imitation of God in all his imitable Perfections, eſpecially his goodneſs and believing magnificiently of it.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of Puniſhments after this Life.

A Man that is endued with the ſame Vertues we have before mentioned need not fear to truſt his Soul with God after death: For firſt, no Creature could be made with a malevolent intent, the firſt Good who is alſo the firſt Principle of all Beings hath but one affection or Property, and that is Love; which was long before there was any ſuch thing as Sin. 2*dly*, At death he goes to God, one and the ſame being, who in his own nature for the ſins of the Penitent hath as well an inclination to Pity as Juſtice, and there is nothing dreadful in the whole Nature of God, but his Juſtice, no Attribute elſe being terrible. 3*ly*, Infinite Power is ever ſafe and need not revenge for ſelf-preſervation. 4*ly*, However *Veri ſimile eſt, ſimilem Deo a Deo, non negligi.*

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

The Probability of ſuch a Deiſts *Salvation before the credulous and ill living* Papiſts.

1. TO be ſure he is no Idolater, the *Jew* and the *Mahometan* accuſe the Chriſtian of Idolatry, the Reform'd Churches, the *Roman*, the *Socinian* the other Reformed Churches, the *Deiſts* the *Socinian*, for his *Deus factus*; but none can accuſe the *Deiſt* of Idolatry, for he only acknowledges one Supream Everlaſting God, and thinks magnificently of him.

2*dly*, The Morality in Religion is above the myſtery in it; for, 1. The Univerſal ſenſe of Mankind in the Friendſhips men make, ſheweth this; for who does not value good Nature, Sincerity and Fidelity in a Friend, before ſubtilty of underſtanding; *& Religio & quædam, cum Deo Amicitia:* An unity of nature and will with God, that is the Root of the Deareſt Friendſhips. Then, 2*ly*, it is an everlaſting rule that runs through all Beings, *Simile a ſimili amatur*, God cannot love what is unlike him. Now, 3*ly*, here lies our trial, here is the ſcene of our obedience, and here are our conflicts with our Paſſions, if this be true then the credulous Chriſtian that believes Orthodoxly, but lives ill, is not ſafe.

3*dly*,

3*dly*, If the *Deists* errs, he errs not like a fool but *secundum verbum* after enquiry, and if he be sincere in his Principles, he can when dying appeal to God, *te bone Deus quæsivi per omnia.*

Notæ Aliquot:

1. The Grand *Arcanum* of Religion among the *Pythagoreans* was, that the object of Divine Worship is one and invisible; *Plutarch* cites this in the Life of *Numa*, as the Dogma of *Pythagoras*, and accordingly his Followers used no Images in their Worships.

2*dly*, The Heathens, notwithstanding their particular and Topical Deities, acknowledged one Supream God, not *Jupiter* of *Creet*, but the Father of Gods and Men, only they said this Supream God being of so high a nature, and there being other intermediate Beings betwixt God and Mankind, they were to address themselves to them as Mediators to carry up their Prayers, and bring down his Blessings; so as the opinion of the necessity of a Mediator was the foundation of the Heathen Idolatry; they could not go to the fountain of Good it self. The Popish Religion stands on the same foundation; whereas the greatest goodness is the most accessible, which shews that Popery was a Religion accommodated to the Sentiments of Mankind from precedent Religions, and not to Infallible Reason drawn from the eternal respects of things; and Reason being the first relation of God, is first to be believed

believed, not depending on doubtful fact without us, but full of its own light ſhining always in us.

3*dly*, It was the common ſence of the wiſeſt Philoſophers, that things were good antecedent to all human Compacts; and this opinion, *Pyrrho* in *Sextus Empericus* argues againſt, alſo Mr. *Hobbs* hath of late revived in the world *Pyrrho*'s Doctrin, tho without reaſon; for as there are immediate Propoſitions, to which the underſtanding (*ſine diſcurſu*) aſſents, as ſoon as propoſed, ſo are there things good and juſt which they will at firſt view, without deliberation approve of and choſe alſo, (*viz.*) the Veneration of an Almighty inviſible Being, referring of our ſelves to him, with a (*fiat voluntas tua*) abhorrence of breach of contract with man, of a lye, as a violation of truth; ſo as, in my judgment, there is a ſanction ariſing from the nature of things, before any Law declared amongſt men; that there is a *generoſum honeſtum* hid in all our Souls is plain, from the *Epicurean* Deiſts themſelves, for they labour to have their Vices imputed rather to a Superiority of their reaſon above that of others, than to a ſervitude of their reaſon to their own paſſions; which ſhews vice is naturally eſteemed a baſe and low thing. This appears from the Legiſlators of the world, as *Numa*, *Zamloxis*, &c. *à Jove Principium*, there they did begin, well knowing human compacts were too weak to ballance and reſtrain the paſſions of human nature; of-

fenders

fenders preſuming to eſcape unpuniſhed, and rightly enough were all Laws but human compacts. In two caſes which ordinarily happen in human life, (*viz.*) when the fact is unevident, or when the Magiſtrate is too weak to puniſh. Hence is *Grotius* his deſcription of the Law of Nature, *Lex eſt*, &c. The Law is a combination of the Vertuous to puniſh the Vicious. Here the Obligation muſt be lodged, and this appears in the Satyrs of the Poets, in the complaints of the Philoſophers, and in the ſeveral ages of the World againſt the manners of Mankind ; for without Vertue God is only a name amongſt men, and no man without it can hope well of God.

4*ly*. I remember *Plutarch* ſpeaking of *Ariſtides*'s Juſtice complains thus, men have commonly three Affections or Opinions of the Gods ; the firſt that they think them bleſſed; the ſecond, that they fear them ; and the third, that they reverence them : They account them bleſſed, becauſe they're Immortal; they fear them, becauſe of their Power ; and reverence them becauſe of their Juſtice ; yet of theſe three men moſt deſire Immortality, whereof our nature is uncapable : Alſo Power which dependeth upon fortune, the only Divinity man is capable of ; they neglect, and undervalue, in that God is inimitable by us: And this is the difference betwixt Corporeal and intellectual Love ; If the object of my Love be external beauty, a perſon or a face, that I cannot

not imitate; but if an Idea of Perfection, and Intellectual Beauty, that I may be aſſimulated to, and partake of, beſides the ſoul in Intellectual love ſuffers not with the object it loves as in a Corporeal love it doth; becauſe that its object the Soveraign God never ſuffers; and this is the chief true converſion which frees us from all evils, the *Mors Philoſophorum*, which *Porphery* ſpeaks of. Others are rolled as upon Cylinders from one appearance of good to another, and live in a perpetual ſtorm; for 'tis not the change but the choice of our Object that makes us happy.

5*ly*. *Antoninus* ſays, if the queſtion be put to us, what is thy art or profeſſion, our Anſwer ſhould be, to be good; as God made the world; not for his own good (who was infinitely happy before) but for his Creatures good: So our Religion muſt neceſſarily be this, to do good to his Creatures; for therein we concur with the will of God, and it is a grand truth, very proper for the Immortal Deiſt to conſider, that all vice and wickedneſs is but a denial and diſowning of God, to be the Supreme, Infinite Good; my Pride denies he has ever been good to me; my luſt believes the low and baſe matter can with its pleaſures make me happier than he can with all his goodneſs; my envy would not have him good to others, but would have him contract and ſhrink up himſelf from his Creatures; and laſtly, my malice and revenge hates his Creatures, if they be but once imagined

gined my Enemies, and would deſtroy thoſe whom his goodneſs firſt and would have ſtill to exiſt.

6*ly* and Laſtly, *Campanella* in his Book *De Senſu Rerum*, obſerves, *Ariſtotelem dicentem Deum non habere cum hominibus amicitiam (quoniam non eſt proportio finiti ad infinitum) Majeſtatem non bonitatem Dei conſideraſſe.*

Fur

For Mr. Hobbs; *to be left with Mr.* Crook, *a Bookſeller, at the Sign of the* Green Dragon *without* Temple-Bar, *near St.* Clements-Church.

Ludgate-Hill, 1678.

Concerning the Arrians, Trinitarians *and Councils.*

SIR,

BY your Permiſſion, and Mr. *Crook*'s Favour, I have had the Happineſs to peruſe your incomparable Treatiſe of Hereſie in Manuſcript, wherein you have certainly given us a more accurate and faithful Account of the Nicene Council, together with their particular Grounds and Reaſons for each diſtinct Article of their Faith in the *Nicene* Creed, than is any where elſe to be met with. How grateful this Diſcourſe of yours will be to the *Quicunque Men*, I ſhall not preſume to determine, ſince I am ſure Mr. *Hobbs* is as much above their Anger, as they are below his Reſentments. You your ſelf have very well obſerved, *when Reaſon is againſt a Man, a Man will be againſt Reaſon*; and

therefore 'tis no wonder to ſee, from ſeveral Intereſts, ſo many ſeveral Opinions and Animoſities ariſe: This made the *Arrians* and *Trinitarians* ſo zealouſly endeavour to ſupplant one another; this made *Conſtantine* at firſt eſpouſe the *Arrian* Intereſt to Mount the Throne, as the preſent *Lewis* XIV did the Intereſt of the *Hugonots*; and afterwards thinking to weaken or at leaſt to ballance that Power that raiſed him, ſtrike in with *Athanaſius* and the *Trinitarians* for a time, as our preſent *Lewis* hath ſince done the like with the Popiſh and Juſuitical Party againſt his Proteſtant Subjects. For Mankind ever lived and died after one and the ſame Method in all Ages, being governed by the ſame Intereſts and the ſame Paſſions at this time, as they were many Thouſand Years before us, and will be many Thouſand Years after us.

It muſt be confeſſed, the *Arrians* were ſo powerful a Sect in the *Roman* Empire (eſpecially the *Eaſtern* Part of it) that the Followers of the *Nicene* Council were not equal to them, either in Number, Splendor, Intereſt or Riches. If you will believe the learned *Petavius* and others, they did offer to be try'd by the Fathers that preceded the *Nicene* Council: For at that Council, they were rather condemn'd by a Party than by the general Conſent of the Chriſtian Church; becauſe *Conſtantine*, out of above Two thouſand Biſhops then aſſembled, excluded all but Three hundred

hundred and eighteen; nor were those perhaps (for Accounts vary) all Bishops, that made up this great Council. They were all of a Judgment at first, and so rather Parties than Judges; the *Arrians* had not the Freedom to dispute their Cause: And the Emperor *Constantine* was afterwards so ill satisfied with their proscription, that he soon recalled *Arrius*, and a little before his Death was baptized by an *Arrian* Bishop. *Constantius* and *Valens* were professed *Arrians* (and not to mention the *Goths*) *Valentinian*, *Theodosius* and other Emperors protected and honoured them, both with civil and military Commands.

The *Arrian* Doctrin was not only confirmed by Eight Councils several times assembled at *Tyre*, *Sardis*, *Syrmium*, *Milain*, *Seluçia*, *Nice*, *Tarsis*, and particularly at *Ariminum* (where six hundred Bishops were of their Opinion, with only three which held the contrary) but they also punished others their Adversaries, who were of a contrary Opinion to them, with Confiscations, Banishments and other grievous Punishments. Now whether the Power of their Party, the Riches of their Churches, the Magnificence of their Worship (as the first that brought Music into the Church) or the fame of their Learning, and pretensions to Reason (which is always an inviduous Plea) did raise Jealousie and Hatred in the Emperors against them, as also rendred them odious to the *Trinitarians*; or what most contributed to

their first Depression and Persecution, I know not: Since to persecute for Religion, was by the *Trinitarians* (*Athanasius*, *Hillary* and others) then accounted an *Arrian* and unchristian Tenet. It is not to be doubted, but that, after the days of *Theodosius*, Reason of State did most prevail towards their Subversion, lest they should joyn with the *Goths*, who at that time possessed of *Italy*, *Spain*, *Africe* and other Provinces, were formidable to the *Byzantine* Empire. Notwithstanding whatsoever it was, 'tis easie to comprehend that the Depression of them did facilitate the Conquest of the *Goths*; and if you will credit *Salvian*, the *Goths* were very pious in their Way, mild to the Conquer'd, just in their Dealings; so that the Wickedness of the Christian Rulers of Provinces, their Exactions upon the People, and Insolence of the Foreign Souldiers, whereby they ruled, made even the *Trinitarians* themselves willingly submit to their Dominion, and prefer it before that of the *Eastern* Emperors.

As for the *Trinitarians* of those Times, I must confess, I cannot but esteem them as Enemies to all human Learning; for they had Canons forbidding them to read any Ethic Books, and a Zeal which disposed them to destroy all they met with of that kind. Thus we may well suppose them universally ignorant, except some few; and as the Pastors, so were the People. Their Religion also consisted rather in an out-side Service, than in-

ward

ward Piety and Knowledge; their Faith was in a manner implicit, the Myſteries of Religion (for ſuch I call the Doctrin of the Trinity and its Dependencies) were ſcarce ever mentioned to them in Sermons, much leſs explicated. Hence the Vulgar became prone to Embrace Superſtition and credit Miracles, how ridiculous and fabulous ſoever: Viſions, Allegories and Alluſions to Texts, were convincing Arguments; and no Demonſtration like to a feigned Story and Legend, or what might be Interpreted a Judgment upon an Heretic.

Amongſt the *Trinitarians* were a ſort of People who followed the Court Religion, and believed as their Prince ordained, living then unconfined by the Dictates of the then declining Church: And though the *Trinitarians* had reſolv'd upon, and ſubſcrib'd to the *Nicene* Council, and embraced thoſe Forms of Speech which are now in uſe, yet did they not underſtand what was meant by them. The *Latin* Church allow'd of Three Perſons, and not of three Hypoſtaſes; the *Greek* Church allow'd of three Hypoſtaſes, and not of three Perſons. As difficult was it for them to Explicate *Uſia* or *Eſſence*; which hard words produc'd a ſubdiviſion amongſt them, conſiſting of *Neſtorians* and *Eutychians*. The *Neſtorians* believing the Deity of Chriſt, held that he was made up of two diſtinct Perſons, and ſo

perfect God and perfect Man. The *Eutychians* averr'd, that Christ had but one Nature, and that upon the Hypostatical Union, the Deity and Humanity were so blended together, by Confusion of Properties and Substances, that one Person endued with one Will did emerge thence. Now these two Sects were of great Power in the *Eastern* Church, and though they were both condemn'd in the third and fourth General Councils, yet did they spread far and near, through *Palestine*, *Ægypt*, the Kingdom of *Abyssines*, and all *Persia* over: Each of them had their Patriarchs, Bishops and Churches contradistinct from the *Melchites*, who adhering and subscribing to the Council of *Chalcedon* (which all the Imperial Clergy did) were called *Melchites*, that is to say, Men of the King's Religion. The Authors of the *Nestorian* and *Eutychian* Sects were Learned and Potent Bishops: *Eutychius* was Patriarch of *Constantinople*, and with him joyn'd *Dioscorius* Patriarch of *Alexandria*, *Severus* Patriarch of *Antioch*, and *Jacobus Baradæus*, from whom the *Jacobites* are at this day denominated. *Nestorius* was also Patriarch of *Constantinople*, and his Sect very much diffused.

The Truth is, such were the Ignorance of the People, and Debaucheries of the Ages at this time, that if a Man did but live a pious strict Life, with great Mortification, or outward

ward Devotion, and were but an Eloquent Preacher, he might in any place of the *Eaſtern* Empire have made a Potent Sect inſtantly. And to ſhew how ignorant the Clergy were at the General Council of *Chalcedon*, in the time of *Marcianus* the Emperor, we find that the *Greek* Tongue was then ſo little underſtood at *Rome*, and the *Latin* in *Greece*, that the Biſhops of both Countries (in all 630.) were glad to ſpeak by Interpreters: Nay, in this very Council of *Chalcedon*, the Emperor was fain to deliver the ſame Speech in *Greek* to one Party, and in *Latin* to the other, that ſo both might underſtand him: The Council of *Jeruſalem*, for the ſame Reaſon, made certain Creeds both in *Greek* and *Latin*: At the Council of *Epheſus*, the Pope's Legates had their Interpreter to Expound the Words; and when *Cæleſtine*'s Letters were there read, the Acts tell us, how the Biſhops deſired to have them Tranſlated into *Greek*, and read over again, inſomuch that the *Romiſh* Legates had almoſt made a Controverſie of it, fearing leaſt the Papal Authority ſhould have been prejudiced by ſuch an Act; alledging therefore, how it was the ancient Cuſtom to propoſe the Bulls of the Sea Apoſtolic in *Latin* only, and that that might now ſuffice. Whereupon theſe poor *Greek* Biſhops were in danger not to have underſtood the Pope's *Latin*, till at length the Legates were content with Reaſon, when it was evidenced

to them, that the major part could not understand one word of *Latin*. But the pleasantest of all, is, Pope *Cælestine*'s Excuse to *Nestorius*, for his so long delay in answering his Letters, because he could not by any means get his *Greek* construed sooner. Also Pope *Gregory* the First ingeniously confesseth to the Bishop of *Thessaly*, that he understood not a jot of his *Greek*; wherefore 'tis probable, the Proverb of honest *Ascursius* was even then in use, —— *Græcum est, non Legitur* —— and this was the Condition of Christianity in which *Justinian* the Emperor found it, *A. C.* 540. So that, as Monsieur *Daillee* has demonstrated with how little certainty we can depend upon the Fathers, I think I may safely averr, there is as little Trust to be reposed in General Councils, who have been Guilty of so much Ignorance and Interest, as well as so frequently contradicting one another: And to say, that Councils may not Err, though private Persons may, is (as Mr. *Hales* well observes) all one as to say, that every single Souldier indeed may run away, but the whole Army cannot.

Sir, Your Treatise having reviv'd these Meditations in me, I hope you'll pardon me if I have been too prolix; and though I am not so vain to pretend to offer these Collections, or indeed any thing, for Mr. *Hobb*'s Instruction, who is of himself the great Instructor of the most

most sensible Part of Mankind in the noble Science of Philosophy; yet I may hope for the Honour of your Correction wherein I am Erroneous, the which will for ever oblige,

SIR,

Your most unfeigned

Humble Servant,

C. BLOUNT.

Pardon, Sir, I beseech you, my sending this trifle, called Anima Mundi, *being commanded to do it by one, whom 'tis my duty, as well as my happiness, to obey.*

To my Dear Friend Mr. *Harvey Wilwood.*

That felicity consists generally in Pleasure.

YOU often profess your self an *Epicurean*, but sacrifice your health in pursuit of a mistaken happiness; the pleasure the wise *Epicurus* plac'd happiness in was of another kind, 'twas more temper'd with Reason; but hear what he says, and then judg how far you are his Disciple. 'Felicity seems plainly to consist 'in Pleasure, this is first to be prov'd in gene-'ral then we must shew in what Pleasure par-'ticularly it consists.

'In general, Pleasure seems to be, as the be-'ginning so the end also of a happy life, since 'we find it be the first Good, and convenient 'to our, and to all animal Nature, and is that 'from which we begin all Election and Avoi-'dance, and in which at last we terminate them 'using this affection as a rule to judg every 'good.

'That Pleasure is the first and connatural 'good, or (as they term it) the first thing sui-'table and convenient to Nature, appeareth

'from

'from that, every animal assoon as born, de-
'sires Pleasure, and rejoyces in it, as the chief
'good, shunneth pain as the greatest ill, and
'to its utmost ability repels it. We see that
'ev'n *Hercules* himself tormented by a Poyson-
'ous Shirt could not with-hold from tears. Thus
'does every undepraved Animal, in its own na-
'ture judging incorruptly and intirely.

'There needs not therefore any reasoning to
'prove, that Pleasure is to be desired, Pain to
'to be shunn'd, for this is manifest to ones sense
'Fire is hot, Snow white, Honey sweet: we
'need no arguments to prove this, it is enough
'that we give notice of it, for since that if we
'take away from man all his senses there is
'nothing remaining; it is necessary that what is
'convenient or contrary to nature, be judged
'by nature her self, and that Pleasure is expe-
'tible in it self, and Pain in its self to be avoi-
'ded; for what perceives or what judges, ei-
'ther to pursue or avoid any thing, except
'Pleasure and Pain.

'That Pleasure as being the first thing
'convenient to Nature, is also the last of
'Expetibles, or the end of good things, may
'be understood even from this, because 'tis
'Pleasure only for whose sake, we so desire
'the rest, that it self is not desired, for the
'sake of any other but only for its self; for
'we may desire other things to delight or
'please our selves, but no man ever deman-
'ded a reason, why we should be delighted,

'cer-

' certainly no more than for what cauſe we
' deſire to be happy, ſince Pleaſure and Fe-
' licity ought to be reputed, not only in the
' ſame degree, but to be the very ſame thing,
' and conſequently the end, or ultimate, and
' greateſt good, on which the reſt depend, but
' it ſelf depends on time.

' This is farther prov'd, for that *Felicity* is
' no otherwiſe than becauſe it is that ſtate, in
' which we may live moſt ſweetly, and moſt
' pleaſantly, that is with the greateſt pleaſure
' that may be; for take from life this ſweet-
' neſs, jucundity, pleaſure, and where I pray
' will be your notion of Felicity? Not of that
' Felicity only which I term'd Divine, but even
' the other eſteem'd human? which is no
' otherwiſe capable to receive degrees of more,
' or leſs, or intenſion, and remiſſion, than be-
' cauſe addition or detraction of Pleaſure may
' befal it.

' To underſtand this better by comparing
' Pleaſure with Pain; let us ſuppoſe a man en-
' joying many great inceſſant Pleaſures, both
' in Mind and Body, no pain hindring them,
' nor likely to diſturb them; what ſtate can
' we ſay is more excellent, or more deſirable
' than this? For in him who is thus affected,
' there muſt neceſſarily be a conſtancy of mind,
' fearing neither death nor pain, becauſe death
' is void of ſenſe; pain if long, uſes to be light,
' if great ſhort; ſo as ſhortneſs makes amends
' for its greatneſs, lightneſs for its length. When

' he

' he arrives at ſuch a condition, as he trembles
' not at the horror of the Deity, nor ſuffers the
' preſent pleaſures to paſs away, whilſt his
' mind is buſi'd with remembrance of paſt, or
' expectation of future good things, but is
' daily joy'd with the reflecting upon them,
' what can be added to better the condition of
' this perſon?

' Suppoſe on the other ſide, a man afflicted
' with as great pains of Body, and Griefs of
' Mind, as mans nature is capable of, no hope
' that they ſhall ever be eas'd, no pleaſure paſt,
' preſent or expected; What can be ſaid or
' imagin'd more miſerable than he?

' If therefore a life full of pains be of all
' things moſt to be avoided, doubtleſs the grea-
' teſt ill is to live in pain, whence it follows that
' the greateſt good is to live in pleaſure: Nei-
' ther indeed hath our Mind any thing elſe
' wherein as its center it may reſt all Sickneſſes,
' and troubles are reduced to pain, nor is there
' any thing elſe which can remove Nature out
' of her place, or diſſolve her.

' That Pleaſure wherein conſiſts Felicity is
' Indolence of Body and tranquility of Mind.
' There being two kinds of Pleaſure, one in
' ſtation or reſt, which is a placability, calm-
' neſs and vanity, or immunity from trouble and
' grief: The other in motion, which conſiſts
' in a ſweet movement, as in gladneſs, mirth,
' or whatever moves the ſenſe delightfully with
' a kind of ſweetneſs and titilation, as to eat

' and

'and drink out of hunger and thirſt: It may 'be demanded whether, in both, or in either, 'and in which conſiſts Felicity? We ſay that 'Pleaſure wherein Felicity conſiſts, is of the 'firſt kind, the ſtable, or that which is in ſta-'tion, and ſo can be no other than indolence 'of Body, and tranquility of Mind. Or not 'pain'd in Body, and not troubled in Mind.

This Doctrine wou'd make any one a Diſciple of *Epicurus*, that will govern himſelf according to the rules of Reaſon; and for the reſt, my Friend, as they are Brutes in quitting their beſt pretence to Humanity, ſo I ſhall no more trouble my ſelf about their manner of life, than I wou'd about that of their Brethren of the Forreſt, or have indeed any more regard to 'em. Let not the complaiſance your good nature infects you with, betray your Reaſon to the importunities of Fools, but rather diſoblige them than your ſelf, and

Your Real Friend,

RA. RICHARDSON.

To

To Madam--------

Of Beneficence, Gratitude.

YOU condemn *Epicuriſm* and Profuſeneſs, and at the ſame time Careſs Avarice, Ingratitude. You rail at the folly of men of ſenſe, and make none but Fools your Friends. Let your Enemy *Epicurus*, better inſtruct your life, or ſet ſome bounds to your tongue. There are Vertues (ſays *Epicurus*) ally'd to Juſtice, for that they have regard to other perſons, tho they are not (as Juſtice is) preſcrib'd by Laws and Covenants, yet they import out of decency a certain obligation like that of Juſtice.

The firſt is *Beneficence*, or the doing good to others, whereunto thoſe are oblig'd who are able to aſſiſt, or relieve others, either with their Hand or Purſe. If theydeny the aſſiſtance of their Hands, they are cenſur'd as barbarous, cruel, inhuman: if that of their Purſe, they are thought the ſame, as alſo ſordid, tenacious, covetous and the like. But if they aſſiſt others, they are accounted courteous, civil, kind, as alſo liberal, magnificent, *&c.* ſo that they are obliged for their own ſakes to do good to others ſo far as may be without prodigality.

Not to paſs as *Pyrrho* is reported along without anyregardto the miſchance of his Friend *Anaxarchus*, that was faln into a Ditch, tho he that cou'd defend ſuch ſordid incompaſſion deſerv'd,to be ſo left.

For thoſe that practice this Vertue procure to themſelves good will, and (what moſt of all conduces to a quiet living) dearneſs and tender eſtimation

eſtimation from others; they who uſe it not ill will, and (what moſt occaſions a troubleſom life) contempt and hatred. Take heed therefore you omit not to be Beneficent, at leaſt in ſmall matters, that ſo you loſe not the advantage of being accounted ready to gratifie others ev'n in great.

Not without reaſon did I ſay formerly it is not only more honourable, but alſo more delightful to give than to receive benefits; becauſe the giver thereby makes himſelf ſuperior to the receiver, and reaps moreover the intereſt of thanks; and there is not any thing that Joys a man more than *Thanks*. A Beneficent perſon is like a fountain, which if you ſhould ſuppoſe it to have a reaſonable ſoul, what joy wou'd it not have at the ſight of ſo many Corn-fields and Paſtures, which flouriſh and ſmile as it were with plenty and verdure, and all by the diffuſion of its ſtreams upon them?

The ſecond is Gratitude, to which every man that receives a benefit is reciprocally oblig'd, unleſs he wou'd incur the greateſt hatred and ignominy. For Ingratitude is worthily hateful to all men, becauſe ſeeing nothing is more ſuitable to Nature, than to be propenſe to receive a good, it is highly contrary to Nature not to be readily grateful toward the Author of that Good.

Now ſince none is more gratefully affected toward his Benefactors than a wiſe man, we may juſtly affirm, that only the wiſe man knows how to fulfil the duty of Gratitude, becauſe he alone

alone is ready upon all occaſions to expreſs his thankfulneſs to his Friends both preſent and abſent, ev'n to thoſe that are dead.

Others pay thanks only to preſent Friends, when preſent, and this perhaps for their own farther ends, to encourage them to ſome new favour; but how few are there who gratefully commemorate their abſent Benefactors? who requite the good they did them upon their * Children, or other Relations? how few who honour their Memory after death? who rejoyce not rather as if their Obligations were cancell'd? Who love thoſe that were dear to them, reſpect them, and as far as in them lyes do them good?

A fooliſh man behind a friends back ſhall ſide with his enemy, not remembring that of *Horace*, *Abſentem qui rodit amicum, qui non defendit*, &c.

* As *Xenophon* to *Xantippe*, and the Children of *Socrates*, who receiv'd no other benefit than his Learning from *Socrates*, and yet expreſſes himſelf in his Epiſtle to *Xantippe* that he takes care only to thrive in the world for the ſake of maintaining her, and the Sons of his old Maſter *Socrates*.

Madam, my Relation to you makes me ſo zealous to reform your faults which render you obnoxious to the Diſcourſe of the World. If you will perſiſt in Vice, diſcover it not by your railery at the oppoſite Vertues; be a better Chriſtian, or learn the Dictates of Nature from a Heathen, either would render you more agreeable to

Your Humble Servant and Kinſman,

Rob. Yaxly.

To

To Mr. Savage; *Theſe.*

Of Fate *and* Fortune.

YOU ſent me word that you deſire to know what the ancient Philoſophers held of *Fate* and *Fortune*: I ſhall here ſend the Opinion of Two of the greateſt (for I ſhall not fear to prefer them to *Ariſtotle*) I mean *Plato* and *Pythagoras*.

Concerning *Fate Plato* held thus; 'All things 'are in Fate, yet all things are not decreed by 'Fate; for Fate, though it be like a Law, 'yet it uſes not to ſpeak after this manner, *That 'this Man ſhall do thus and to that Man*, that 'ſhall befal (which were to proceed to infinite 'Generation of Men, and infinite Actions 'hapning daily to them; beſide, that this 'would take away our free Will, our praiſe or 'diſpraiſe, or whatever is of that kind) but 'rather thus: Whatſoever Soul chuſeth ſuch a 'Life, and doth *ſuch* things, *theſe* ſhall follow. 'The Soul therefore is free, and is left within 'its power to do or not do, without any com-'pulſion or neceſſity. But that which follows 'the Action is perform'd by Fate. As from '*Paris*'s raviſhing *Helena* (which is within my 'power to do or not to do) ſhall follow, that 'the *Grecians* contend with the *Trojans* about *He-'lena*. Thus *Apollo* foretold *Laius*, *If thou beget* 'a *Son*,

'*a Son, that Son ſhall kill thee.* In the Oracle are 'comprehended both *Laius* and he begetting of 'a Son, that which follows the begetting of a 'Son depends on Fate. That which may be 'done is of a middle kind, betwixt true and 'falſe; and being ſo indefinite by Nature, that 'which is in our power is carried on as it were 'unto it. That which is done by our Election, 'is preſently either true or falſe; that which is 'in power is different from that which is ſaid 'to be in Habit and Act. That which is in 'power declareth an Aptitude in that thing 'wherein the Habit is not perfect: So a 'Boy may be ſaid to be a *Grammarian*, a Mu-'ſician, a Carpenter, in power: He is in 'the Habit of one or more of theſe, when he 'he hath acquired this Habit. He is ſaid to 'be in Act when he operateth according to that 'acquired Habit. That which we call poſſi-'ble to be done is none of theſe. Indetermi-'nate is that which is in our power, and to 'which part ſoever it inclines will be true or 'falſe.

Pythagoras *of Fate and Fortune ſays,*

All the parts of the World above the Moon are governed according to Providence, and from Order, the Decree of God which they follow; but thoſe beneath the Moon by four Cauſes, by *God*, by *Fate*, by our *Election*, by *Fortune*. For inſtance, to go abroad into a Ship,

Ship, or not, is in our Power; Storms and Tempeſt to ariſe out of a Calm, is by Fortune; for, the Ship being under water, to be preſerved, is by the Providence of God. Of Fate there are many Manners and Differences; it differs from Fortune, as having a Determination, Order and Conſequence; but Fortune is ſpontaneous and caſual, as to proceed from a Boy to a Youth, and orderly to paſs through other degrees of Age happens by one manner of Fate. ——— There is alſo Fate of all Things in general, and in particular, the cauſe of this Adminiſtration.

As for *Zeno* and ſome other Philoſophers, I will in my next ſend you their Opinions, till then I reſt

Yours to Command,

AN. ROGERS.

TO

TO THE

Right Honourable

THE

MOST INGENIOUS

STREPHON.

Ludgate-Hill, Feb. 7th. 16$\frac{12}{88}$.

Concerning the Immortality of the Soul.

My LORD,

I Had the Honour Yesterday to receive from the Hands of an Humble Servant of your Lordship's, your most incomparable Version of that Passage of *Seneca's*, where he begins with, —— *Post mortem nihil est, ipsaque mors nihil*, &c. —— and must confess, with your Lordship's Pardon, that I cannot but esteem the Translation to be, in some measure, a confu-

confutation of the Original; ſince what leſs than a divine and immortal Mind could have produced what you have there written? Indeed, the Hand that wrote it may become *Lumber*, but ſure, the Spirit that dictated it, can never be ſo: No, my Lord, your mighty Genius is a moſt ſufficient Argument of its own Immortality; and more prevalent with me, than all the Harangues of the Parſons, or Sophiſtry of the Schoolmen. No ſubject whatever has more entangled and ruffled the Thoughts of the wiſeſt Men, than this concerning our Future State; it has been controverted in all Ages, by Men of the greateſt Learning and Parts. We muſt alſo confeſs, that your Author *Seneca* has not wanted Advocates for the Aſſertion of his Opinion; nay, even ſuch, who would pretend to Juſtifie it, out of the very Scriptures themſelves: *Ex. gr.* as when *Solomon* ſays (*Eccleſ.* 7. 12.) —— *Then ſhall the Duſt return to Duſt as it was, and the Spirit to God that gave it.* —— And (*Eccleſ.* 3. 20, 21.) when he declares, —— *All go to the ſame place; all are of duſt, and all turn to duſt again. Who knoweth the Spirit of Man that goeth upward, and the Spirit of the Beaſt that goeth downward to the Earth* —— Again (*Eccleſ.* 3. 19.) when he tells us, —— *That which befalleth the Sons of Men befalleth Beaſts, even one thing befalleth them both: As the one dieth ſo doth the other; yea, they have all one Breath: ſo that a Man hath no preeminence*

above

above a Beaſt —— Likewiſe to ſuch who are deſirous to know what their Friends are in the other World, or (to ſpeak more properly) their dead Friends, know; *Solomon* anſwers their inconſiderate *Utinam* (*Eccleſ.* 9. 5.) with theſe words —— *The Living know they ſhall die, but the Dead know not any thing.* — Moreover, others, for the purpoſe, cite that Paſſage of *Luke* 20. 38. where it is ſaid —— *He is not a God of the Dead, but of the Living* — All which Texts (through the Weakneſs of Underſtanding) have by ſome Men been miſapplied, as concurrent with the *Anima Mundi* of *Pythagoras*, which has been ſince in great meaſure revived by *Averroes* and *Avicenna*, although in one point they differ'd among themſelves: For, that *Averroes* believed, after Death, our Souls return'd and mix'd with the common Soul of the World; whereas *Avicenna* thought it a diſtinct portion of the *Anima Mundi*, which after our Deaths remain'd entire and ſeparate, till it met with ſome other Body capable of Receiving it, and then being cloathed therewith, it operated *ad modum Recipientis.* Monſieur *Bernier* likewiſe gives us, agreeable to *Averroes*, an account of much the ſame Opinion held at this time by ſome of the *Indians* of *Indoſtan*, whoſe Faith he Illuſtrates after this Manner, —— 'They believe (ſays he) 'the Soul in Man's Body to be 'like a Bottle fill'd with Sea-water, which

'being

'being close stop'd and cast into the Sea, 'tydes it up and down, till by some Acci-'dent or other the unfaithful Cork, or de-'crepit Bottle, becomes disorder'd, so as the 'Water Evacuates and Disgorges it self a-'gain into the common Ocean, from whence 'it was at first taken —— Which agrees very well with what (as *Philostratus* tells us, *lib.* 8. *chap.* 13.) *Apollonius* after his Death revealed to a Young Man concerning the Immortality of the Soul in these words, as rendred from the *Greek*: ——

Est Anima immortalis, & incorrupta manebit,
Non tua res, verum quæ providet omnia Divæ;
Quæ velut acer equus, corrupto corpore Vinclis
Prosilit, & tenui miscetur flamine Cæli:
Cui grave servitium est, atque intolerabile visum. ——

The Soul's immortal, and once being free,
Belongs to Providence, and not to thee:
She, like a Horse let loose, doth take her flight
Out of the Carcass, and her self unite
With the pure Body of the liquid Sky;
As weary of her former slavery. ——

But

But he, among the Heathens, who ſpake plaineſt and fulleſt of this matter, was *Pliny* in his *Natural Hiſtory*, lib. 7. ch. 4. where he writes to this purpoſe:

'After the Interment of our Bodies, there 'is great diverſity of Opinions concerning 'the future ſtate of our wandring Souls 'or Ghoſts; But the moſt general is this: 'That in what condition they were before 'they were born men, in the ſame they 'ſhall remain when dead: foraſmuch as 'neither Body nor Soul hath any more ſenſe 'after our dying-day, than they had before 'the day of our Nativity. However ſuch 'is the Folly and Vanity of men, that it 'extendeth even to future Ages; nay, and 'in the very time of Death even flatter-'eth it ſelf with fine Imaginations and 'Dreams of I know not what after this 'Life. For, ſome crown the Soul with 'Immortality: others pretend a Transfi-'guration thereof: and others ſuppoſe 'that the Ghoſts ſequeſtred from the Body 'have ſenſe; Whereupon they render them 'honour and worſhip, making a God of 'him, that is not ſo much as a man: As if 'the manner of mens Breathing differ'd 'from that of other Living Creatures: or, 'as if there were not to be found in the 'World many more things that live much 'longer than man; and yet no man judg-'eth in them the like immortality. But

'shew me, if you can, what is the Substance
'and Body of the Soul (as it were) by it
'self? what kind of matter is it apart
'from the Body? where lieth the Cogita-
'tion that she hath? how is her Seeing?
'how is her Hearing perform'd? what
'toucheth she? Nay, what one thing doth
'she? how is she employ'd? or if there
'be none of all this in her, what Good can
'there be without the same? Again, I
'would fain know where she resides after
'her Departure from the Body? and what
'an infinite multitude of Souls, like sha-
'dows, would there be in so many Ages
'as well past, as to come? Now, surely,
'these are but fantastical, foolish and chil-
'dish Toys; devised by Men that would
'fain live always; the like foolery is there
'in preserving the Bodies: Nor was the va-
'nity of *Democritus* less, who promis'd a
'Resurrection of the Body, and yet himself
'could never rise again. But what a folly
'of follies is it, to think that Death should
'be the way to a second Life? what Repose,
'what Rest could ever the Sons of Men
'have, if their Souls did remain in Heaven
'above with sense, whil'st their shadows tar-
'ry'd beneath among the infernal Spirits:
'certainly these sweet Inducements and
'pleasing Persuasions, this foolish Credulity
'and easiness of Belief, destroyeth the bene-
'fit of the best gift of Nature, Death. It

'like-

'likewiſe doubleth the pains of a Man that 'is to dye, if he does but conſider what is 'to become of him hereafter: how much 'more eaſie and greater ſecurity were it for 'each Man to ground his Reaſons and Reſo-'lutions upon an Aſſurance, that he ſhould 'be in no worſe a condition, than he was be-'fore he was born? Now theſe (my Lord) with what others I have mention'd in my *Anima Mundi*, are the chief Opinions of the *Mortaliſts* among the ancient Heathens.

In Anſwer to which, ſome of our Moderns argue, That if the Soul be not immortal, the whole Univerſe would at this time be deceiv'd, ſince all our Laws do now ſuppoſe it ſo. But to this it has been reply'd, That if the whole be nothing but the parts, (as muſt be allow'd) then, ſince there is no Man who is not deceiv'd, as *Plato* ſaith, it is ſo far from an Offence, that it is abſolutely neceſſary to grant, either that the whole World is deceiv'd, or at leaſt the greater part of it; for ſuppoſing that there be but three Laws, *viz.* that of *Moſes*, that of Chriſt, and that of *Mahomet*: either all are falſe, and ſo the whole World is deceiv'd; or only two of them, and ſo the greater part is deceiv'd. But we muſt know, as *Plato* and *Ariſtotle* well obſerve, That a Politician is a Phyſician of Minds: and that his Aim is, rather to make Men good, than knowing; wherefore, according to the diverſity of

Men, he muſt render himſelf agreeable to the diverſity of humors, for the attainment of his end. Now there are ſome Men ſo ingenuous and good-natur'd, that they are induc'd to Virtue by the meer excellency thereof, and withdraw themſelves from Vice, purely for the ſake of its own deformity; and theſe are Men the beſt diſpoſed, tho' rarely to be met with. Others, who are worſe enclined, notwithſtanding the beauty of Virtue, and turpitude of Vice, do ſtill practiſe virtuous things, and refrain from thoſe that are vicious, meerly out of Rewards, Praiſes, Honours, Puniſhments and Diſpraiſes, whom we may enrol in the ſecond Rank. Again, others, for hope of ſome good, as well as for fear of corporal puniſhment, are made virtuous: wherefore Politicians, that they may attain ſuch virtue, allure them with the hopes of Riches, Dignity and Command; at the ſame time, to prevent their committing Vice, they terrify them with ſome puniſhment either in Purſe, Honour or Body. But others, out of a ſavageneſs and ferocity of Nature, are moved with none of theſe things, as daily experience ſheweth: wherefore for ſuch, they have propoſed to the Virtuous, Rewards in another Life; and to the Vicious, Puniſhments, which do moſt of all terrify: ſince the greater part of Man, if they do good, do it rather out of fear of eternal Loſs, than

hope

hope of eternal Gain; foraſmuch as we have a more ſenſible *Idea* of Suffering and Loſſes, than of *Elyzium*, and the good entertainment there. Now becauſe this laſt Expedient may be profitable to all Men of what condition ſoever, Lawgivers conſidering the proneneſs of Men to evil, and themſelves aiming at the Public Good, eſtabliſh'd the Immortality of the Soul, perhaps, at firſt, not ſo much out of a regard to Truth, as to Honeſty, hoping thereby to induce Men to Virtue. Nor are Politicians to be ſo much blamed herein, more than Phyſicians, who many times, for the benefit of their Patients, are compell'd to feign and pretend divers things: ſince, in like manner, Politicians deviſe Fables only to regulate the People; notwithſtanding, in theſe Fables, as *Averroes* ſaith, (*Prolog. in* 3. *Phyſ.*) there is properly neither Truth nor Falſehood: Thus Nurſes bring their Children to thoſe things which they know are good for them, after the like manner; whereas if the Man or the Child were either ſound in Body or Mind, neither would the Phyſician or the Nurſe ſtand in need of ſuch contrivances. Likewiſe, if all Men were in that firſt Rank abovemention'd, tho' we ſhould admit the mortality of the Soul, they would yet (perhaps) be virtuous and honeſt; but ſuch are rare to be found, and therefore it is neceſſary to uſe other Expe-

dients: neither is there any Abſurdity therein, ſince almoſt all humane Nature is immerſt in matter, and partaketh but little of the Intellect: whence Man is more diſtant from Intelligences, than a ſick Man from him that is ſound, or a Fool from a Wiſeman; ſo that it is no wonder if a Politician makes uſe of ſuch ways or means, for the publick eſtabliſhment of good manners. And therefore, *my Lord*, beſides the Authority of the Holy Scriptures, as alſo the innumerable other Arguments which may be deduc'd as well from Philoſophy as Reaſon, to prove the Immortality of the Soul, together with its Rewards and Puniſhments, (tho' I determine not their duration) yet there is no Argument of greater weight with me, than the abſolute neceſſity and convenience that it ſhould be ſo; as well to compleat the Juſtice of God, as to perfect the happineſs of Man, not only in this World, but in that which is to come. And for this very Reaſon, when I hear *Seneca* the Philoſopher, and others, preaching up the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality, with a

Quid mihi Curæ erit tranſfuga?

Tackt to the end of it, nothing under Heaven to me ſeems more unaccountable or contradictory. For, as to ſuppoſe a hu n-drum Deity chewing his own Na-

Nature, a droning God ſit hugging of himſelf, and hoarding up his Providence from his Creatures, is an Atheiſm no leſs irrational, than to deny the very eſſence of a Divine Being; ſo, in my Opinion, to believe an Immortality of the Soul, without its due Rewards and Puniſhments, is altogether as irrational and uſeleſs, as to believe the Soul itſelf to be mortal; by ſuch a Faith we rob the Soul of its beſt Title to Immortality: for what need is there of an Executor, where there are no Debts to pay, nor any Eſtate to inherit? But *Pomponatius*, and eſpecially *Cardan* in his *Theonoſton*, will furniſh *your Lordſhip* with great Variety upon this Subject, altho' I am ſure you will meet with ſo noble an entertainment no where, as in your own thoughts.

(My LORD)

Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient

humble Servant,

BLOUNT.

To the deſervedly Honoured and moſt Ingenious Major A. *concerning the Original of the* Jews.

SIR,

I Receiv'd yours, and have formerly ſeen a Tranſlation of the Annals of *Tacitus*, but never yet met with that of his Hiſtory, altho', as I have been inform'd, it is not only rendred into *Engliſh* by the great Sir *H. S.* but likewiſe illuſtrated with very learned Notes of his own writing: which makes me the more admire at what you ſay, that a perſon of his knowledge and judgment, ſhould ſo far complement the *Jewiſh*, as to rob the *Engliſh* World of the Fifth Book of *Tacitus* his Hiſtory, by omitting any part of it in his Verſion; ſince, according to the true method of Tranſlating, an Author ought not to be drawn off, but generouſly and freely pour'd out of one Language into another: leaſt in ſeparating him from the Dregs, you leave the Spirit behind you. Nevertheleſs, I hope, this one Example will not be ſufficient to introduce an *Index Expurgatorius* among us; whereby Poſterity might be tempted to eſteem Writing, Reading and Books, as things unprofitable. *Juſtin*, the

the Epitomizer of *Trogus Pompeius*, is more fairly dealt with; notwithstanding in the 36th Book of his History, he doth, for the most part, concur with *Tacitus* in his account of the Original of the *Jews*; all which the Translator hath sincerely and impartially given his Reader in *English*: wherefore, according to your desire, I shall only trouble you with what was never yet publish'd in our Language, *viz.* what *Tacitus* speaks concerning this Subject, in the 5th Book of his History, which is as follows.

'Some conceive the *Jews* to have been 'Exiles from the Island of *Crete*, and to 'have planted themselves upon the Borders 'of *Lybia*, about the time when *Saturn* suf- 'fer'd expulsion from his Dominions by 'Jupiter; the Reason whereof is grounded 'upon the Name: for there being in *Crete* 'a Mountain, not a little remarkable, call'd 'Ida, the Inhabitants, by a barbarous intru- 'sion of a letter, were call'd *Judæi*, quasi *Idæi*. 'Others say, that the Mob swarming through- 'out *Egypt*, when *Isis* bare Rule there, these 'were evacuated into bordering Countries, '*Hyerosolimus* and *Judas* having at that time 'the Command over them. Again, many 'think them to have been a People of *Ethio-* 'pia, whom King *Cepheus*, betwixt fear and 'hatred, thought fit to have removed. O- 'thers also make them to have been an indi- 'gent People of *Assyria*, who having pos-

'ſeſs'd themſelves of part of *Egypt*, by de-
'grees built Cities, incroaching upon the
'*Hebrew* Countries, and Borders of *Syria*.
'But, among the reſt, ſome will entitle
'their Original to a more honourable deri-
'vation, *viz.* to be the *Solimi* of *Aſia*, a
'People mention'd by *Homer* with honour,
'who, from their own, gave name to *Jeru-*
'*ſalem*. However, ſundry Authors agree,
'that there being an Epidemical *Scabies*
'throughout *Egypt*, which much polluted
'their Bodies, King *Occhoris* addreſſing him-
'ſelf to *Hamon*'s *Oracle*, and ſupplicating a
'Remedy, receiv'd this Mandate, viz. *To*
'*purge the Kingdom of that ſort of People,*
'*which were not acceptable to the Gods, and to*
'*convey them into other Countries.* Where-
'upon Inquiſition being made, they were ga-
'ther'd together, and proſcribed for a
'march. But being afterwards left in a
'Wilderneſs, diſanimated and drooping
'with Lamentations, one of the Proſcri-
'ption, *Moſes* by name, adviſed them to
'abandon all expectation of Aid, either
'from Gods or Men, being thus forſaken
'both, and to confide only in him as
'their celeſtial Guardian, who were al-
'ready by their preſent truſt freed from
'ſome miſeries. They aſſented, and, as an
'ignorant People, adventured under his
'Conduct; in which Pilgrimage, nothing
'fatigued them more, than the want of
'Water:

'Water: when lying in the Fields ready to 'periſh with Thirſt, there paſſed by an 'Herd of wild Aſſes towards a Creek, very 'much ſhadow'd with Groves; whom *Moſes* 'follow'd, imagining there might be a fruit-'ful Soil: and diſcovers fair Channels of 'Water, wherewith they refreſh'd them-'ſelves. Now the ſixth day of their Tra-'vels being at an end, on the ſeventh they 'poſſeſs'd themſelves of Lands, (expelling 'the Inhabitants) wherein were both City 'and Temple conſecrated. When *Moſes*, 'to the end he might confirm to himſelf this 'People for the future, conſtitutes new Rites 'different from the reſt of the World; 'eſteeming thoſe things prophane, which, 'with us, were ſacred; and indulging others, 'which we interdicted. They, likewiſe, 'conſecrated the Effigies of an *Aſs*, for be-'ing their Guide to the Waters where they 'ſatisfied their Thirſt; as alſo ſacrificed a '*Ram* in contempt of *Jupiter Hamon*. They 'offer'd up an *Ox* likewiſe, under which 'Effigies the *Egyptians* worſhip'd *Apis*. They 'abſtain'd from Swines fleſh, in memory of 'their *Scabies*, (whereto this Creature is 'very obnoxious) wherewith they were 'polluted. They commemorate their long 'Famine with frequent Faſtings; the loſs of 'their Fruits with unleaven'd Bread; and 'every ſeventh day they reſted, becauſe that 'gave a Period to their Labours: which af-

'terwards

'terwards grew ſo pleaſing to them, that 'they devoted every ſeventh year to their 'eaſe. Others are of opinion that they did 'this in honour of *Saturn*; but by what 'means ſoever they have been introduced, 'they have no Antiquity for their Patroni-'zation. Other ſiniſter and filthy Inſtitu-'tions have been prevalent for their pravi-'ty; and all the very dregs of the People '(who contemned the Religions of their 'own Countries) accumulated Tributes 'hither: whereby the ſubſtance of the '*Jews* was very much enlarg'd. Among 'themſelves, they were very fruitful and 'merciful; but for all others, had an irre-'concileable hatred. They were a People 'very much inclin'd to Luſt, and however 'they abſtain'd from mixing with *Aliens*, 'yet nothing was eſteemed unlawful a-'mongſt themſelves: Now this brought in 'their Cuſtom of *Circumciſing* their *Genitals*, 'thereby to diſtinguiſh them from others; 'and whoſoever expected to be incorpora-'ted into them, was to do the ſame: after which, the firſt Leſſon they taught them was, 'to contemn the Gods, forſake their Coun-'try, and diſeſteem of Parents, Children, 'Brethren, *&c.* *Tacit. lib.* 5.

Now, beſides the concurrence of *Trogus*, we hear alſo of others, who pretend to much the ſame both with him and *Tacitus*, as thoſe

those ancient *Egyptian* Writers, *Manethon*, *Chæremon*, *Lysimachus*, *Appion*, and others: nor does *Josephus* seem to produce any considerable Confutation of their Opinions; only in general, he finds fault with their mistaking of Names, and other such small Variations in their Histories, which to impartial Readers are very inconsiderable. Nay, we see *Josephus* does not so much reject the Truth of *Manethon*'s History; but when it was for his advantage, he could make use of him, in quoting his Writings, to prove the Antiquity of his Countrymen the *Jews*; so that, however in Circumstances and Names of particular persons they might vary, yet that the *Jews* were banish'd out of *Egypt* for *Scabies*, that *Moses* their Commander gave them new Laws of his own making, forbidding them to converse or marry with strangers; as also that they afterwards, to revenge their Banishment, invaded *Egypt*, putting the *Egyptians* and their King to flight, (as they did) in all this (I say) most of the ancient *Egyptian* Writers agree, as we may gather from *Josephus* his own Writings.

The Tradition of the *Memphites*, concerning *Moses*'s passing the *Red Sea*, was,

That *Moses* being well acquainted with the condition of the place, observed the Flux and Reflux of the Waters, and so brought over his Army by dry Land.

However,

However, had this been wrought immediately by God, we need not (ſays *Joſephus*) ſo much wonder at it, for that the *Pamphylian* Ocean did the ſame to Great *Alexander* of *Macedon*, and gave way to him and his Followers, the Waves themſelves marking out a Path, rather than any thing ſhould hinder the Deſign which God had purpoſed to them, *viz.* to overthrow the Kingdom of *Perſia*, and this *Joſephus* in theſe very words records; ſo that by leſsning the Miracle, he deſtroys it: making it ceaſe to be a Wonder, while he ſtrives to make it fit to be believ'd.

Abraham and *Moſes* ſeem'd firſt to inſtitute Religious Worſhip, and both of them were well skill'd in *Egyptian* Learning: which gave occaſion for ſome to think, that *Moſes* and the *Jews* took divers of their Cuſtoms from the *Egyptians*; as for Inſtance, their *Circumciſion*, becauſe *Herodotus* ſays, that the *Phœnicians* and *Syrians* in *Paleſtine* (which muſt be the *Jews*, ſince none elſe us'd it in *Paleſtine*) took their *Circumciſion* from the *Egyptians*; alſo (ſays he) they confeſs the ſame themſelves: nor does *Joſephus* deny as much: only ſays (without giving any reaſon why) that he doubts, whether they learnt it of the *Egyptians* and *Ethiopians*, or whether the *Egyptians* and *Ethiopians* learnt it of them, but does not affirm or deny either: *Joſeph. Cont. Ap.* However,

ever, *Bochartus* in his *Phaleg*, as well as Dr. *Stillingfleet* in his *Origines Sacræ*, affirm the latter; not to mention *Theophilus Gale*, and other Gleaners upon the ſame Subject.

The Article of one true God, was common both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, even before their Reception: the univerſality of Religious Worſhip conſiſting in the practice of Virtue and Goodneſs, we may find alſo common to the *Gentiles*, as well as to the *Jews*: or if it be ſaid, that Precept in the *Decalogue*, *That we ſhould make no graven Image, nor the likeneſs of any thing that is in Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath*; was particular to the *Jews*; it will be found, that whatſoever they ſaid thereof, the *Perſians* and other neighbouring Nations concurred therein; as alſo in the reſt of the Commandments: thus *Feriari Deo* is a kind of *Sabboth-keeping*.

The ancient *Jews*, and modern *Chriſtians*, have many Rites and Ceremonies common with the *Gentiles*; which is more than our vulgar Divines do imagine. Moſt of the *Jewiſh* Laws and Rites were practiſed among the *Gentiles* indifferently, or at leaſt did not much vary from them, as the diligent Searchers into Antiquity well know. The *Gentiles* as well as the *Jews*, held the moſt ſubſtantial parts of *Moſes* his Doctrines, without differing in much more than certain parcicular Laws, more proper for that Country than any other, as, their not eating

ing

ing Swines fleſh; their making Adultery death, &c. ſince, as the Notions of God, and a good Conſcience, are written in our Souls at this day, ſo we cannot juſtly think, any of our Foreſathers among the *Gentiles* were deprived of them.

But when all is done, SIR, theſe Relations of *Trogus*, *Tacitus*, and the reſt, are only the uncertain Accounts of partial Authors, ſince the beſt and only Hiſtory extant to be rely'd on for this Subject, is the Holy Scriptures, (dictated, as every good Chriſtian ought to believe, by the Holy Spirit) therefore, tho' I ſend you theſe other Accounts to gratify your Curioſity, yet referring you to theſe for matter of Truth, I ſhall give you no farther trouble, than to aſſure you I am (without Reſerve)

(*SIR*)

Your unfeigned Friend,

Decemb. 12. 1692.

And faithful humble Servant,

BLOUNT.

To

To his Friend, Toriſmond, *to Juſtifie the Marrying of two Siſters, the one after the other.*

SIR,

ACcording to your Letter, I find the Objections urged againſt your marrying *Eugenia*, your Ladies Siſter, are chiefly theſe three;

1. *That you being her Brother in Law, by having formerly married her Siſter, it would be not only a Violation of the Canon Law, but alſo of the Levitical, and conſequently a ſin.*
2. *That it is againſt the known Laws of the Land, and ſo might be dangerous and troubleſom to you both.*
3. *And Laſtly, That ſuch a match being a thing unuſual, and contrary to cuſtom, it might reflect upon your Honours.*

All which Objections I do conceive ſo eaſily to be anſwered, that (were it not too great a confidence in any man to ſay ſo) with that little knowledge I have, either in Civil, Canon or Common Law, I would aſſert it to be lawful, and accordingly enter the

the Liſts of Argument againſt any Levitical or Canonical Gameſter whatever upon that ſubject. in the mean time, what I have briefly collected, for your ſervice, upon this occaſion is, as follows.

'Tis confeſſed, the 99*th* Canon of the Church of *England* is poſitive in its determination, that no man ſhall marry within the Degrees prohibited by the Laws of God, and expreſſed by a Table ſet forth by Authority, *Anno Dom.* 1563. in the 17*th* particular of which Table, it is declared, that a man may not marry his Wives Siſter: the foundation of which Prohibition, both in the Canon and Table is this. (*viz.*) *Kindred and Affinity forbidden to marry by the Laws of God:* So that the Prohibition, as well in the Canon, as in any part of the Table, ſeems to be no farther obliging, then as it is forbidden by the Laws of God, and the ſame dependance likewiſe have our Statute Laws in this Caſe, to which they wholly refer.

The firſt Text of Scripture, which is commonly urged in this Caſe, is that of marrying a Brothers Wife, which ſeems to be forbidden; where by a ſide wind they would bring in that of marrying a Wives Siſter as a parallel, ſaying, *ubi eadem Ratio, ibi idem Jus.* But, with their pardon, the ſimile does not run upon four feet, the Reaſon is not the ſame: For the words (in *Levit.*

Levit. 18. and 16.) which forbid the marrying a Brothers Wife, ſay, *becauſe a man thereby uncovers his Brothers Nakedneſs*: which ſeems not at all to be a good Reaſon againſt marrying the Wives Siſter; becauſe every man is ſuppoſed to have diſcovered his firſt Wives Nakedneſs before any ſuch marriage with her Siſter. Beſides, all Penal Laws (ſuch as *Moſes*'s are in this Chapter,) which concern Life, Limb, nay and the very Soul too in this caſe, are no where conſtrued by Parallels, but ſtraitly tyed up to the very expreſs Letter of the Law, or elſe no man would be ſafe, if he were liable to hang'd by way of compariſon for a ſimilitude, or being like the Picture of a Traytor: and this makes *Moſes* ſo exact in particularizing each Crime, that whereas in prohibiting you to uncover your Fathers Nakedneſs would have ſerv'd likewiſe for the Mothers, the Reaſon being the ſame, yet nevertheleſs he in expreſs words particularizes and forbids both diſtinctly by themſelves, and in like manner does the ſame in all other Caſes, which he need not have done if he had deſign'd to have any caſes not mentioned come within the equity and conſtruction of thoſe that are: as becauſe I muſt not marry my Brothers Wife, therefore I muſt not marry my Wives Siſter, a pretty Syllogiſm indeed. Beſides, if it were ſo intended there, then, what follows had been unneceſſary. For—— The

The Canon of Scripture which ſeems more nearly to concern this Caſe, is *Lvit.* 18. 18. where it is ſaid, Neither ſhalt thou take a Wife to her Siſter to *Vex* her, to uncover her Nakedneſs, beſides the other *in her Life-time.*

Though Polygamy was allowed under the Law, yea, and *Jacob* did actually marry two Siſters, *Leah* and *Rachel*, yet it is here forbidden that one man ſhould at one and the ſame time have two Siſters in Marriage; It was adjudged inconvenient, and *Diodate* upon this Text ſaith——

The Reaſon of the Inconveniency is, it would be a kind of confuſion, to make two Siſters Rivals or Adverſaries to one another, 'twould produce continual Jealouſies and Strifes, as an example may be ſeen in *Jacobs* Marriage, which in thoſe firſt Ages were tolerated.

But this doth not therefore ſeem to reſtrain or prohibit the marrying of two Siſters one after another, for the firſt being dead, the other cannot be a Rival or Vexation (as the Text calls it) to her dead Siſter: aud then how ſhall the Prohibition be urged, if the Reaſon of it be removed? It is rationally apparent, that there is great ſtreſs placed in thoſe expreſſions (*during her Life*) and (*to Vex her in uncovering her ſhame upon her*) as doth more fully appear in our Tranſlation of the Bible in Queen *Eliza-*

Elizabeths Reign, Printed *Anno Domini* 1599.——

Thou ſhalt not take a Wife with her Siſter, during her Life to Vex her. in uncovering her ſhame upon her. ——

Which ſeems to be very ſuitable to the Greek Tranſlation, γυναῖκα ἐπ' ἀδελφῇ ἢ λήψῃ ἀντίζηλον, ἀποκαλύψαι τὴν ἀκαθαρσίαν αὐτῆς ἐπ' αὐτῇ, ἔτι ζώσης αὐτῆς: where the Prohibition running upon theſe Terms, or containing theſe Conditions, that a man ſhall not take a Wife, ἐπ' ἀδελφῇ αὐτῆς, with her Siſter, ἔτι ζώσης αὐτης, during her Life: becauſe it would be ἀντίζηλος, a Vexation to her; but ſhe being dead, all thoſe inconveniencies expire with her, and ſo it may probably be imagined that *Ceſſante Ratione*, *Ceſſat Prohibitio.*

And that this is the proper tendency of the words, is the opinion of the Learned *Grotius*, in his Tract. *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, *lib.* 2. *cap.* 5. *paragr.* 14.

Nam de ſingulis partibus ne intelligatur, argumento eſſe poteſt interdictum, de non habendis eodem tempore in Matrimonio Sororibus duabus: For that it ought not to be underſtood upon all Occaſions is ſufficiently proved by the Prohibition it ſelf, which forbids only the having two Siſters in Marriage at one time.

And this he doth not deliver as his own private Opinion, but refers to the Authority

rity of the Ancient Canons, the Composers whereof did not seem to esteem such a Marriage absolutely sinful, but inconvenient, and so obnoxious to penalties: As in the same Paragraph of *Grotius*, (*Lin.* 17.) *Certe Canonibus Antiquissimis, qui Apostolici dicuntur, Qui duas Sorores alteram post alteram duxisset, aut ἀδελφιδὴν, id est, Fratris aut Sororis Filiam; tantum à clero arcetur:* certainly whoever should have married two Sisters, the one after the other, or the Daughter of his Brother or Sister, was by the most ancient Canons, which are called Apostolical, only forbidden entring into the order of Priesthood.

Where it was esteemed inconvenient and offensive, there the person so doing ought not to be admitted to be a Priest, but that was the only punishment laid upon him, *tantum à Clero arcetur.* But doth not prejudice a Layman, such as my Friend *Torismond* is, who, I presume, never designs to to enter into the Priestly Office, unless it were to be a Confessor to the fair Sex; neither doth it forbid Marriage to a Priest, only restrains him from Marrying two Sisters, one after another.

For a man to marry two Sisters successively is unusual, (because most have enough of one out of a Family) and by Canonists esteemed inconvenient; but it doth not appear by them to be forbidden any where,

where, except it be *Lege Humanâ*, by Human Law; which may reſtrain under a Penalty, but doth not therefore make the marriage either ſinful, or void, when compleated: Whereas, if it had been prohibited *Lege Divinâ*, by a Divine Law, then both the contracting of it, and living in full Matrimony had been ſinful, whether the Canons of men had been for it, or againſt it. But if it be not againſt the Laws of God, it is ſo far from being forbidden by the Laws of our Land, that it is rather confirm'd by the 32 *H.* 8. 38. where it is enacted and declared,

That the Marriages of all Perſons ſhall be adjudged Lawful, who are not prohited by God s Law to Marry. Which I urge in oppoſition to the ſecond Objection, *viz.* that 'tis againſt the Laws of the Land to marry two Siſters, and ſo may be dangerous.

But againſt this ſome may object, that this Statute of *H.* 8. was enacted, 1540. and the Table ſet forth by Authority, which the *99th* Canon doth confirm, was ſet forth after it, in 1563. to which may be anſwered, that the Canon neither did, nor could repeal the Statute of *H.* 8. And that as a Canon it was a Human Law, as well as the other, and cannot therefore be intended to make void any Marriage, which the Law of God hath not prohibited and made void:

void: with which *Grotius* doth concur, and particularly applies it to the Caſe in hand, at the concluſion of his aforemention'd Paragraph ——

Sed ſciendum ſimul eſt, non quod vetitum eſt fieri lege humana, ſi fiat, irritum quoque eſſe, niſi & hoc Lex addiderit & ſignificaverit: But (ſaith he) 'tis alſo neceſſary to be known, that what is forbidden by humane Law to be done, if it be done, is not therefore void, unleſs the Law has alſo added and ſignified as much.—— And then he proceeds to give you a Quotation of ſome ancient Canons, which did, under a Penalty, forbid ſuch a Marriage, but not make it void: *Canon Eliberinus, 60.* ——

Si quis poſt obitum uxoris ſuæ, ſororem ejus duxerit, & ipſa fuerit fidelis, per Quinquennium eum à Communione abſtinere, eo ipſo oſtendens, manere vinculum Matrimonii; & ut jam diximus, in Canonibus qui Apoſtolici dicuntur. Qui duas ſorores duxerit, aut fratris filiam, tantùm Clericus fieri prohibetur: If any one, after the death of his Wife, marries her Siſter, and ſhe proves faithful to him, he muſt, during five years, abſtain from the Communion, which ſhews that the Bond of Matrimony ſtill remains inviolable; and, as we have already ſaid, in thoſe Canons which are called Apoſtolical, whoſoever marries two Siſters, or his Brother's Daughter, is only forbid to be a Prieſt—which is indeed

indeed as near as poſſible to the words of the Canon ſet forth by *Joverius* in his Collection of Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions, *A. D.* 1555. *Claſ. p.* 3. *Apoſtolorum Canon*, 18. *Qui duas ſorores duxit, aut Conſobrinam, Clericus eſſe non poteſt:* Whoever has married two Siſters, or his Neece, muſt not be a Prieſt.

Now that theſe ancient Canons retain their Validity, is apparent, not only from the practice of the learned and judicious *Grotius*, as well as other eminent Civilians, who appeal to their Authority; but they likewiſe receive confirmation and encouragement from the Laws of our own Nation; it being Enacted, 25 *H.* 8, 19.

That all Canons, Conſtitutions, Ordinances, and Synodals Provincial, not repugnant to the King's Prerogative, nor to the Cuſtoms, Laws and Statutes of this Kingdom, ſhall be uſed and executed, till ſuch time as they ſhall be otherwiſe order'd and determined.

Now upon theſe preceding Authorities ſome Queries may be offer'd: As,

1. Whether the 99th Canon *Eccleſ. Angl.* and the Table ſet forth 1563, concerning the prohibited Degrees of Marriage, do not derive their Force from the Sacred Writ, ſo that they are not to be underſtood, or extended farther than the Scriptures do plainly direct?

2. Whether the Energy and Force of *Levit.* 18. 18. be not grounded upon the Reaſons contain'd in the Text? ſo that *ceſſante Ratione, ceſſat Prohibitio.*

3. Whether if the Marriage of two Siſters, one after the other, be not poſitively againſt the Law of God, it be not adjudg'd lawful, and confirm'd by the 32 *H.* 8. 38?

4. Whether the Solution of *Juſtinian* in the like Caſes of Affinity, (viz.) *Privignæ & Nurûs*, in the firſt Book of his Inſtitutions, (*Tit.* 10. *de Nuptiis. Paragr.* 6.) be not properly applicable to *Levit.* 18. 18? *Si una tibi nupta eſt; ideo Alteram, Uxorem ducere non poteris, quia duas Sorores eodem tempore habere non licet.*

5. Whether if any of the Canons *Eccleſ. Angl.* be dubious, it be not proper and convenient to conſult the ancient Canons for Explanation and Illuſtration?

6. And laſtly, Whether upon theſe preceding Conſiderations, to marry two Siſters, *Alteram poſt Alteram*, be *malum vetitum Lege divinâ*, and ſo ſinful *forô Cônſcientiæ*, and ſuch Marriage void? or only inconvenient and obnoxious to Eccleſiaſtical Cenſures and Penalties, which the Eccleſiaſtical Court may either inflict or commute?

Now to conclude with this firſt and principal Objection, Whether it be a Sin againſt the

the Levitical Law? I ſhall only make three ſhort Remarques.

1. That there are many other Laws in *Leviticus*, that are no more aboliſh'd by Chriſt, than this of Marriages, which yet are wholly neglected, and no ways look'd upon as obligatory.

2. Many doubt, Whether any of the Laws given to the *Jews* in particular, are binding to other Nations, excepting only thoſe revived by Chriſt, which this of Marriages never was?

3dly, and laſtly, 'Tis worth our obſervation, that when the Queſtion was put to Chriſt by the *Sadducees*, about the Wife that had been married to ſeven Brethren, tho' 'twas a common practice among them, and he had ſo fair an opportunity offer'd him, yet he never reproves the Cuſtom of one Womans marrying ſeveral Brethren, but anſwers only to the plain Queſtion as 'twas put, *That at the Reſurrection they neither marry, nor are given in Marriage:* Now ſince he did reprove and aboliſh all their other evil Cuſtoms, it may well be ſuppos'd he thought not this ſo, or otherwiſe he would have condemn'd it with the reſt.

As for the ſecond Objection, That ſuch a Marriage would be againſt the known Laws of the Land, and therefore dangerous to you both:

I have ſufficiently anſwered this already, as likewiſe the third and laſt Objection; ſince, as well the Statute Laws, as Honour and Conſcience in this caſe do wholly depend upon the Legality of ſuch a Match according to the Law of God, which point I think has been pretty well clear'd by what has been ſaid before. But for the better illuſtration of the matter, I will preſent you with a ſhort view of the Original and Foundation of theſe Laws.

The Statute Laws of this Land never meddled with the Degrees of Kindred in relation to Marriages, till *Henry* the eighth's time; which happen'd thus.

Prince *Arthur*, eldeſt Son to *Henry* the *7th* married *Katharine*, the Infanta of *Spain* in *November*, 1502, but on the ſecond of *April* following the Prince dyed; *whoſe Death* (ſays Dr. *Burnet*) *was imputed to his uſing too great an exceſs in his Love towards her.* (So that it is not likely he left her a Maid, as ſome would have it:) After which the Princeſs having watch'd ten Months, to ſee that ſhe was not with Child by Prince *Arthur*, ſhe was married to her Husband's youngeſt Brother, afterwards *Henry* the *8th*, by whom ſhe had two Sons, and one Daughter *Mary* (ſince Queen of *England*,) the two Sons dying young, and only his Daughter *Mary* ſurviving. Now *Henry* the *8th* growing weary of his Queen, as think-

thinking he ſhould have no more Children by her, deſired a Divorce, and then (tho' he had been married many years, by and with the Advice of *Fox* Biſhop of *Winchester*, and ſeveral of his chief Clergy,) he firſt pretends a ſcruple of Conſcience, for being married to his Brothers Wife, the *Pope* nor *Church* would not allow of his ſcruple in that kind, nor grant him any Divorce, but choſe rather to forfeit their Intereſt in theſe Kingdoms; however King *Henry*'s Luſt prompting him, to make uſe of any ſhift to obtain his deſires, he bribed ſome few Members among the foreign Univerſities to give him their opinions, that the Marriage was unlawful, and a Divorce but reaſonable, which accordingly his Commiſſioners executed in a Clandeſtine manner at *Dunſtable*. After this, the Parliament (who, during his Reign, were aw'd into a compliance with him in all things, being for the *Pope*'s Supremacy, when ever he was for it; and as much againſt it, when he was againſt it) made a Law (32 *H.* 8. ch. 38.) in compliment and confirmation of his Divorce and ſecond Marriage, limiting all Marriages to the Degrees of the Levitical Law: ſo that we ſee this Law was made, not of any Religious or pious Conſideration whatſoever, but only to ſerve a turn, and gratifie the Luſt of an imperious Prince. And one conſideration further is worthy

our Notice; *viz.* that this very Princess *Mary* was afterwards allow'd and approv'd of by the Judgment of the whole Nation, and of all *Christendom* besides, to be undisputably the right and Lawful soveraign Queen of *England*, and so lived and dyed, notwithstanding the said Act of Parliament and Divorce; to which Title and Dignity, she could no ways have pretended, had the Marriage between *Hen.* 8. her Father, and his Brothers Wife Queen *Katharine*, (who was her Mother) been adjudged by the world unlawful.

As to the *third* and *last Objection*, that such a Match being unusual and contrary to Custom, may reflect upon your Honours: this is the weakest objection of all others. For as Conscience is but the Reflection of Vertue in our own minds; so Honour is but the vibration or darting those Beams abroad among our Friends and Acquaintance, thereby to illuminate our own Reputations. So that all this Objection is at once answer'd, if there be no violation of Vertue in the Action; which, I hope, I have already in a great measure demonstrated by the former part of this Discourse: for I do not see where Vertue can be concern'd in an Action, that is neither impious to God, nor unjust or injurious towards man; as I am sure such a Marriage is neither. Your Relation of Affinity, was but

in

in the nature of a Bargain, and upon your Lady's death, the leaſt expired, and the whole contract ended. Couſin *Germans* (who marry daily) have a near Conſanguinity and mixture of the ſame Blood, whereas you two have not one Dram of the ſame. But the moſt confuſedly and fooliſheſt Queſtion of all is, *What will the World ſay?* Gather two Flowers off one Root, eat two Grapes off one Branch, Marry two Siſters? a thing never known before: But I hope both *Toriſmond* and *Eugenia* have too much ſence to be ſtartled at ſuch Mobb Bugbears; ſince no Body of Reaſon will argue that the Rarity or Novelty of a thing is any Reflection either upon Honour or Conſcience; for as much as every thing is intrinſically either good or bad of it ſelf; nor can the opinion of others any ways alter the Nature of it: At this rate, every new Law, and every new Mode or Faſhion, may be eſteemed diſhonourable and vicious, as violating the oldeſt. He that alters his Watch by every Dial he come at, ſhall never have it go well: ſo he that alters or ſteers his courſe of Life according to the various Cenſures of the world, can never live wiſely or comfortably; for as much as every mans Intereſt furniſhes him with a By-Conſcience of his own, however ſome may pretend the contrary, and others may perhaps not really diſcern it themſelves. Laſtly, to urge the

common Usage, Practice and Custom of our times, is the effect of Narrowness of Soul, and meanness of Thought. For Custom is an Argument will lie as well for Vice, as Virtue: Drinking, Whoring, and Gaming have as ancient a Prescription for their Plea, and as universal, as any Vertues whatsoever. It is a common and ancient usage to rob upon St. *Albans* Road, is it therefore ne're the more lawful? Nothing can be more ridiculous than to make Antiquity and Precidents the standard and measure of Good and Evil: 'twould be a pleasant Argument for a Jilt to use to her Spouse, *Lord Husband, your Father was a Cuckold, will not you be one?* And yet perhaps such a Question would be as seriously Rational, as most of the things that govern Mankind: only one's merry Folly, and the other a grave Folly. But, to conclude, at this rate, we ought to have continued in the *Popish* ignorance of our Fore-Fathers, as esteeming all Reformations and Changes unlawful.

By Education most have been misled,
So they believe, because they so were bred:
The Priest continues what the Nurse began,
And thus the Child imposes on the man.
Hind and *Pant.*

If

If what I have here written may prove effectual to the purpose it was design'd, I shall think my labour well spent: but never be dismaid with the thoughts of being wondred at; or if any one should tell you a Bear that's led through the Streets is no more: Pray ask him from me what Emperors hazard their Crowns for? Generals venture their Lives for? Poets crack their Brains over their *Paladian* Oyl for? I doubt all ends in being wonder'd at; crowed with a Mob in the Streets, who, by way of Gratitude, point at him, and cry, *that's He*; and if they do the same to you, 'tis but fancying your self an Emperor, a General, a Poet, or a Lover, 'tis all one among Friends.

Yours,

Burton. Staff.
March 8. 1693.

BLOUNT.

To the Right Honourable and most Ingenious *Strephon*, being a Diſcourſe of Sir *H. B*'s. *De Anima.*

Ludgate-hill, Febr. 8th 1679.

My Lord,

Nothing leſs than the Honour of your Commands, could have inſpired me with a Confidence ſufficient to trouble your Lordſhip with this undigeſted heap of my Father's Thoughts concerning the Soul's acting, as it were, in a ſtate of Matrimony with the Body: But ſince it is your Lordſhip's pleaſure, as alſo to have them in his own very words, I have here ſet them down accordingly, and ſhall plead only your Lordſhip's *Fiat* for my Pardon.

Tantus in Nobis non manet in Identitate, ſed [illegible] ingeritur per renovationem conti[illegible], ſicut flamma, ſed velociore tranſitu, quia [illegible] ſpiritualior. Nos quotidie facti ſumus [illegible] tranſeunt in nos: morimur & renaſ[illegible], neque iidem hodie & heri ſumus,

mus, & personam quam transeuntem non sentimus, tandem pertransisse agnoscimas.

Nulla est rerum transitio in nos, nisi per viam alimenti; omne alimentum respectu alimentandi est consimile & debilius: Alimentantis corpus succrescit nobis in corpus; spiritus in spiritum. Non tamen proportio utriusque sit nobis ad proportionem Cibi & Potus, aut aeris nisi à nobis bene superantur; aliter etenim non alunt ingesta, sed opprimunt si fortiora sunt, corrumpunt si dissimilia, idque plus minusve pro gradu in utroque: Ideoque quo melius res procedat multa fieri oportet: primum prudens electio & moderatio eorum, quæ ingerenda sunt; & deinceps debita præparatio per artem, ut nobis similiora & debiliora fiant: ex parte Nostri præcipuum est exercitium frequens sed modicum quo calor naturalis vigeat.

Credibile est homines prout in iis pollet spiritus corpusve, alios melius in se convertere alimentantium spiritum, alios corpus: ideoque inter gulones & potores nonnulli minus stupidi reddantur quam alii, & nonnulli minus morboso & oppleto corpore evadunt quam alii: plurimque tamen ingenio plus obest excessus in potu, quam in cibo; quia potus spirituosior est, corpus verò magis opprimitur esculentis, quoniam ea ut magis corporea plus gravant.

Anima sapiens lumen siccum: corpus sanum temperies sicca & pervia: ideoque siccare sed deobstruere convenit: idque sit vicli exercitio & aëre idoneis sed parum sagaciter plaraque

solum

Solum ut calida, frigida, humida vel ſicca notamus: in illis qualitatibus non eſt rerum energia: longe divimus magiſque intrinſecum quiddam eſt in rebus, quo rei cardo vertitur quodque ſolum experientia & effectu agnoſcitur: eſt Deus in rebus; eſtque omnia, & omnia agit: illius namque infiniti corpus eſt omne & ſpiritus: ex eorum Unione oritur creatura; quæ etiam diſperditur diſſolutione iſtius Unionis: cum autem omnia perpetuo ſunt in motu de una conjectura in aliam, Mundi autem corpus & Spiritus æterna ſed novas continuo conjecturas ineunt; ideoque nos creaturæ ſumus æterni Dei apparitiones momentaneæ, quas tantum terris oſtendunt fata, nec ultra eſſe ſinunt, veluti effigies in Aulæis.

Dei opus ſumus nos parentibus inſtrumentis; actioneſque noſtræ Dei ſunt opera inſtrumentis nobis, ſed per electionem noſtram agentibus: iſta verò electio per aptas conjecturas & Ideas adeo immiſſas invitatur & regitur.

Per Condenſationem & Rareſactionem partes Mundi corporeæ fiunt Spiritus, & ſpirituales fiunt corpora: ſicque æternè retro aguntur omnia: Lumen Jovi, *tenebræ* Plutoni; *Lumen* Plutoni, *tenebræ* Jovi: *ut* Hippocrates *habet; cum Microcoſmus à Mundo trahit, vivit Microcoſmus: cum Mundus à Microcoſmo trahit, deficit Microcoſmus.*

These,

Theſe, my Lord, are only ſuch twilight Conjectures as our human Reaſon (whereof we yet ſo vainly boaſt) can furniſh us with: this τὸ θεῖον, or *Divinum Aliquid*, (as *Hippocrates* terms it) is that which does all things; but our Capacity not being able to diſcern it, makes us faſten either upon elementary Qualities, as *Hippocrates* and *Galen* do: or upon Geometrical Proportions, as our modern *Deſcartes* doth; ſo that (indeed) all Philoſophy, excepting Sceptiſm, is little more than Dotage. Pardon, I beſeech you, this Boldneſs from

(*My* LORD)

Your Lordſhip's moſt faithful

humble Servant,

BLOUNT.

To the Right Honourable and most ingenious Strephon, *giving a Political human account of the Subversion of* Judaism, *Foundation of* Christianity, *and Origination of the* Millenaries.

Ludgate-Hill, Decemb. 1678.

My Lord,

I humbly ask your Lordships pardon for this presumption; but when I had last the honour of waiting upon you, your Lordships candour gave me the freedom of Venting my own Thoughts; and then, as the subject of our discourse was, about the great Changes and Revolutions that from time to time had happen'd in the Universe, so I made bold to assert, that in all Mutations, as well Ecclesiastical, as Civil, I would engage to make appear to your Lordship, that a Temporal Interest was the great Machine upon which all human Actions moved; and that the common and general pretence of Piety *and* Religion, *was but like Grace before a Meal: accordingly, I have presumed to trouble your Lordship with these ensuing Remarques, to justifie the same Assertion.*

THere was never any Republick which dwindled into a Monarchy, or Kingdom altered into an *Aristocracy* or Common-wealth,

wealth, without a *Series* of preceding Cauſes that principally contributed thereunto; had not other Circumſtances concurr'd, never had *Caſar* eſtabliſh'd himſelf, nor *Brutus* erected a Senate: And if you enquire, why the firſt *Brutus* expell'd *Tarquin*, and the ſecond could not overthrow *Auguſtus* and *Anthony*? Or why *Lycurgus*, *Solon*, and *Numa*, could eſtabliſh thoſe Governments, which others have ſince in vain attempted to ſettle in *Genoa*, *Florence*, and other places, you will find it to ariſe from hence: that ſome conſidering thoſe antecedent Cauſes, which ſecretly and ſecurely encline to a Change, took advantage thereof; whilſt others did only regard the Speciouſneſs or Juſtice of their Pretenſions, without any mature examination of what was principally to be obſerved; for nothing is more certain, than that in theſe Caſes, when the previous diſpoſitions all intervene, but a very ſlight occaſion, nay, oftentimes, a meer Caſualty, opportunely taken hold on, and wiſely purſued, will produce thoſe Revolutions, which (otherwiſe) no humane Sagacity or Courage could have accompliſhed.

I cannot find any authentic Ground to believe, that the Sects among the *Jews* were more ancient than the days of the *Maccabees*, but aroſe after that *Antiochus* had ſubdued *Jeruſalem*, and reduced the generality of

of the *Jews* to Paganism; when (the better to confirm his Conquests) he erected therein an Academy for the *Pythagorean*, *Platonic* and *Epicurean Philosophers*. This, I conceive, (and so do others) was the Original of the *Pharisees*, *Sadduces* and *Essenes*; tho' afterwards, when the *Macchabees* had anathematized all that taught their Children the *Greek* Philosophy, one Party did justify their Tenets, by entituling them to *Sadoc* and *Baithos*, and the other to a *Cabala* derived successively from *Ezra* and *Moses*. The Introduction of those Sects, and of that *Cabala*, occasion'd that Exposition of the Prophecy of *Jacob*, viz. *The Scepter shall not depart from* Judah, *nor a Lawgiver from between his Feet, until* Shilo *come, and unto him shall the gathering of the People be.* From whence they did (according to that fantastic *Cabala*) imagine, That whensoever the Scepter should depart from *Judah*, and the Dominion thereof cease, that then there should arrive a Messiah. But as for his being of the Line of *David*, this was no general Opinion; for how then could any have imagined *Herod* the Great to have been the Messias? Or how could *Josephus* fix that Character upon *Vespasian*, as him who should restore the Empire, and Glory of *Israel*, to whom all Nations should bow, and submit unto his Scepter? I do not read that the *Jews* harbor'd any such Exposition during their

their Captivity under *Nebuchadnezzar*; albeit that the Scepter was at that time ſo departed from the Tribe of *Judah*, and houſe of *David*, that it never was reſetled in it more. After their return to *Jeruſalem*, no ſuch thing is ſpoken of; when *Antiochus Epiphanes* ſubdued them, prophaned their Temple, deſtroyed their Laws, and left them nothing of a Scepter or Lawgiver; during all which time, notwithſtanding they had the ſame Prophecies and Scriptures among them, there is no News of any expected Meſſiah. But after the Curioſity of the Rabbins had involved them in the purſuance of myſtical Numbers, and pythagorically or cabaliſtically to explain them according to the *Gematria*, then was it firſt diſcover'd, that *Shiloh* and Meſſiah conſiſted of Letters which make up the ſame Numerals, and therefore that a myſterious promiſe of a Redeemer was inſinuated thereby: as alſo, that the Prophecy of *Balaam* concerning a Star out of *Jacob*, and a Scepter riſing out of *Iſrael*, with a multitude of other Predictions, (which the condition of their Nation made them otherwiſe to deſpair of) ſhould be accompliſhed under this Meſſiah. I name no other Prophecies, becauſe they are either general and indefinitely expreſt as to the time of their Accompliſhment, or inexplicable from their obſcurity, or uncertain as to their Authority:

ſuch

ſuch as are the Weeks of *Daniel*, which Book the *Jews* reckon among their *Hagiographa* or Sacred, but not Canonical Books.

This Prophecy likewiſe had a contradictory one, where 'tis ſaid of *Coniah*, *That no man of his ſeed ſhall proſper ſitting upon the Throne of* David, *and ruling any more in* Judah, *Jer.* 22. 30. Alſo *Ezek.* 22. 26, 27. *Thus ſaith the Lord God, Remove the Diadem, and take off the Crown, this ſhall not be the ſame*, &c. Now the aforeſaid obſcure Prophecy, which did not take effect at firſt, until the Reign of *David*, and which ſuffer'd ſuch a variety of Interruptions, ſeemeth to have fallen under this Interpretation in the days of *Herod* the Great, whom the *Jews* ſo hated for his Uſurpation over the *Macchabees* Levitical Family, and for his general Cruelties, that he was particularly deteſted by the cabaliſtical *Phariſees*, who, to keep up the Rancor againſt him and his Lineage, as well as to alienate the People from him, I could eaſily imagine the Expoſition of this Prophecy to have been for no other purpoſe. Neither perhaps was *Herod* much diſpleas'd with the ſaid Interpretation of the Prophecy, after the *Herodians* had accommodated it to him, and made him the Meſſiah, who (after their Conqueſt and Ignominy under *Pompey*) having reſtor'd the *Jews* to a great reputation and ſtrength, and rebuilt

rebuilt their Temple, found ſome who could deduce his Pedigree from the thigh of *Jacob*, as directly as *David*'s and *Solomon*'s were.

Now this Conſtruction of the Prophecy being inculcated into the People, and into all thoſe *Jews*, Strangers or Proſelytes which reſorted to *Jeruſalem* at their great Feſtivals, (from *Alexandria*, *Antioch*, *Babylon*, and all other parts where the *Jews* had any Colonies) there aroſe an univerſal expectation of a Meſſiah to come, (excepting amongſt the *Herodians*, who thought *Herod* the Meſſias) and afterwards poſſeſt the *Jews* (for our *Jews* are but the Remains of the *Phariſees*) to this very day. But their impatience for his appearance, ſeems to have been leſs under *Herod* the Great, than ever ſince the firſt Interpretation of the Prophecy, (there being no mention of falſe Meſſiahs at that time) perhaps, becauſe the Prophecy was not ſo clear and convincing whilſt that *Herod* was King: ſince under him the Scepter and Legiſlative Power ſeem'd to be ſtill in *Judah*, tho' ſway'd by an *Idumæan* Proſelyte, the Prieſthood continu'd, the Temple flouriſh'd, and there was a Prince of the *Sanhedrin*, *Rabbi Hillel*, of the Lineage of *David*. But ten years after the Birth of Chriſt, when *Archelaus* was baniſh'd to *Vienna*, and *Judea* reduc'd into the form of a Province, the Scepter then ſeem'd

to

to be entirely departed from *Judah*; the Kingdom was now become part of the Government of *Syria*, and ruled by a Procurator, who taxed them ſeverely, then the ſenſe of their miſeries made the People more credulous; and whether they more eaſily believ'd what they ſo earneſtly deſir'd might happen, or whether the Malecontents (taking the advantage of their afflictions) did then more diligently inſinuate into the multitude that opinion, it ſo hapned, that there aroſe at that time ſundry falſe Meſſiahs, and the World was big with expectation, (rais'd in every Country by the *Jews*, who had receiv'd the intelligence from their common Metropolis *Jeruſalem*) that the great Prince was coming, who ſhould reeſtabliſh the *Jewiſh* Monarchy, and bring peace and happineſs to all the Earth.

Now theſe Circumſtances made way for the reception of Chriſt, and the Miracles he did, (for Miracles were the only Demonſtrations to the *Jews*) convincing the People that he was the Meſſiah, they never ſtaid till he ſhould declare himſelf to be ſo: (for I think he never directly told any he was ſo, but the Woman of *Samaria*) or evinced his Genealogy from *David*; (for tho' ſome mean perſons call'd him the Son of *David*, and the Mobb by that Title did cry *Hoſanna* to him, yet did he acquieſce in terming himſelf the Son of Man) but eſteem'd

eſteem'd him a Prophet, *Elias*, *Jeremiah*, and even the very Meſſiah. Alſo when he made his Cavalcade upon an *Aſinego*, they extoll'd him as the Deſcendant of King *David*: but his unſeaſonable apprehenſion and death (together with his neglect to improve the inclination of the People to make him King) did allay the affections of the *Jews* towards him, diſappoint all their hopes, and ſo far exaſperated them againſt him, that they who had been part of his Retinue at his entrance, did now call for his execution, and adjudge him by common Suffrage to be crucify'd: inſomuch that his Diſciples fly, the Apoſtles diſtruſt, and ſufficiently teſtify their unbelief, by not crediting his Reſurrection. But after that he was riſen again, and they aſſur'd thereof, they reaſſume their hopes of a temporal Meſſias, and the laſt Interrogatory they propoſe unto him, is, *Lord, wilt thou at this time reſtore the Kingdom to* Iſrael?

After his Aſſumption into Heaven, they attended in *Jeruſalem* the coming of the Holy Ghoſt, which ſeized on them, and gave them *the Gift of Tongues* (as 'tis written) *for a ſeaſon*; whereby they preach'd to the *Jews*, *Elamites*, *Parthians*, *Alexandrians*, &c. (whom *Salmaſius* ſhews, not to be abſolute Strangers to the Natives of thoſe Countries, but *Jews* planted there) as alſo to the Proſelytes. Theſe being ſurprize'd with the Miracle

Miracle of the *Cloven Tongues*, and *Gift of Languages*, as likewiſe being poſſeſt with the deſire and hopes of a Meſſiah, and being further aſcertain'd by the Apoſtle *Peter*, *That Jeſus* (whom *Pilate* had crucify'd) *was the Lord and Chriſt*, were, to the number of 3000, immediately baptized into his Name; and ſuch as were to depart, when they came to their Colonies, did divulge the tydings, and engage other *Jews* and Proſelytes to the ſame Belief: the Apoſtles themſelves going about, and ordaining likewiſe others to preach the glad tydings of a Meſſiah come; who (tho' dead) was riſen again (according to the obſcure Prediction of *David*) for the ſalvation of *Iſrael*: and whoſe ſecond appearance would compleat the happineſs of all Nations, as well *Jews* as *Gentiles*.

Having thus therefore given your Lordſhip an Account of the ſubverſion of *Judaiſm*, as well as of the foundation of Chriſtianity, the origination of the *Millenaries* is only the conſequence of the Fall of the one, and Riſe of the other; for it is apparent, that not only the *Jews*, but alſo the *Chriſtians* were *Millenarics*, and did believe and expect the temporal Reign of a Meſſiah, together with the Union of the *Jews* and *Gentiles* under one moſt happy Monarchy. Not one of the two firſt Ages diſſented from this Opinion; and they who

oppoſe

oppoſe it, never quote any for themſelves before *Dionyſius Alexandrinus*, who liv'd (at leaſt) 250 years after Chriſt. Of this Opinion was *Juſtin Martyr*, and (as he ſays) all other Chriſtians that were exactly Orthodox. *Irenæus* ſets it down exactly for a Tradition, and relates the very words which Chriſt us'd when he taught this Doctrine; ſo that if this Tenet was not an univerſal Tradition in the primitive Times, I know not what Article of our Faith will be found to be ſuch. This Doctrine was taught by the conſent of the moſt eminent Fathers of the firſt Centuries, without any oppoſition from their Contemporaries; and was deliver'd by them, not as Doctors, but Witneſſes: and not as their own Opinion, but as Apoſtolic Tradition. Moreover, it was with this pretence of Chriſt's being a coming to reign with them here in Glory, that ſtopt the mouths of the unbelieving *Jews*, who before, upon his death and ſuffering like other Men, began to doubt very much of the power of his Meſſiaſhip, which made them diſtruſt his reigning in Glory amongſt them here on Earth, as it was foretold the Meſſiah ſhould do; wherefore this *Millenary* Invention of his coming again to reign in Glory ſalv'd all.

And thus your Lordſhip ſees, the wickedneſs of Mens Natures is ſuch, that all Revolutions

lutions whatever both in Church and State, as well as all Mutations both in Doctrine and Matters of Faith, be they never ſo pious and ſacred, or never ſo beneficial and uſeful to Mankind, both in their Souls and Bodies, yet they muſt ſtill be ſeconded by ſome private temporal Intereſt, and have ſome humane Prop to ſupport them, or elſe all will not do. My Lord, I am ſenſible I have a thouſand Pardons to ask your Lordſhip for this tedious impertinence, but to do ſo at this time, were but to lengthen, and conſequently add to my Crime: So I ſhall only beg the honour to ſubſcribe my ſelf at preſent,

(MY LORD)

Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient

humble Servant,

BLOUNT.

To his Ingenious Friend Mr. Ph. *Lodging between the Two Temple Gates in* Fleetstreet, *concerning the several Sorts of* Augury *practised among the Ancients*, 1692.

SIR,

ACcording to your desire, I have sent you my few inconsiderable Observations concerning that sort of the ancient Heathenish Superstitions, which was committed to the management of their *Augurs*. There were two kinds of *Augury*, Natural, and Artificial: the Natural was taken from a constant Experiment of Events following upon such and such Causes of Signs; the Artificial was that which was interpreted by *Augur* to portend something more than can be known by the ordinary course of Nature. *Cicero* herein mentions two sorts of Priests, whereof the first took care of the Ceremonies and Rites; the second of Divinations, and foretelling things to

come; of which ſorts, it was lawful only for the latter to be *Augurs* or Prophets. Again, theſe were divided in three Orders, *Augures*, *Hæruſpices*, and *Extiſpices*; who had all diſtinct Colledges, but yet they were all Prieſts.

There were five principal kinds of *Augury*; the firſt taken from the Heavens, or ſuperior parts of the world: the ſecond from Birds: the third from two footed Creatures: the fourth, from four footed ones: and the fifth or laſt *ex divis*, or from unuſual Prodigies. They likewiſe took Divinations from Sneezing once, twice, thrice, or oftner, as ſignifying ſomething to come, either good or bad. Itching, Palpitation, and ſhaking or trembling of ſome Limbs, or ſome parts of the Body, had their Interpretation alſo: of all which the *Egyptians* are ſaid to have been the firſt Authors.

The Birds commonly uſed for *Augury* were of two ſorts: Præpetes, ſuch as Eagles, Vultures, Butiones, Sanquales and Immuſſuli, of whom *Pliny* ſpeaks, and which may be a certain kind of Hawk; the other ſort are call'd *Oſcines*, as foreboding ſomething to come, by their Voice, Tune or ſinging. All manner of Owls were thought fatal; but Swans the contrary. Other Birds, together with certain Inſects, as Bees, Ants, Locuſts, *&c.* did

did ſignifie ſometimes good, and ſometimes bad, in the obſervation whereof, the *Augurs* regarded the ſight of the Heavens, as ſuppoſing certain Planets did preſide and govern at ſome hours, more than others. Young Birds were not admitted into *Auguries*, as not being of ripe underſtanding. Some Prædictions were alſo taken from Fiſhes, as *Pliny* ſaith, whereby we may ſee that Superſtition, like Fire, endeavours to reſolve all things into it ſelf, or like a cunning Expoſitor, interprets every Text to the Intereſt of his own party: for it here appears, that all Animals whatſoever, were in ſome degree, time or place thought to be ominous.

Auguries were taken at the ſame time Meat was given to Chickens, which was called *Boliſtima Tripudia:* theſe *Auguries* were never undertaken till the Gods were firſt invoked with much ſolemnity. At which time a proceſſion was made by the Senators, *Patricii*, and better ſort of the People, who were for the moſt part crown'd with Bayes, and attended with their Wives and Children, they again being followed by the inferiour ſort: Before all whom the *Pontifex Maximus* march'd in great ſtate, having about him only certain young Boys and Virgins, either crown'd with or carrying Lawrels in their hands, and ſinging certain Verſes,

which tended to the Demanding of the Gods prosperity and peace, (as occasion was;) and in this pompous manner they made a Procession to the Temple of their Gods; whose Images were carv'd with Garlands, called by the Ancients *Strophia*, made of Vervin. There were also *Lectisternia*, or Canopy-Beds appointed for the Gods with much Magnificence and Ceremony, that, when they pleas'd, they might repose themselves thereon by Couples; as *Jupiter* with *Juno*, *Neptune* with *Minerva*, *Apollo* with *Diana*, *Mars* with *Venus*, or *Vulcan* with *Vesta*, &c. sometimes also the same Gods were represented in company with other Goddesses, as it pleas'd the Priests, whereof you may read *Gell. lib.* 5. 1. Now from hence the manner of the *Christians* going in Procession was thought to be first taken; it being esteem'd but a politick and wise part in them to conform their Religious Rites, as much as was possible, to the practice of the ancient *Roman* Empire, without innovating more than needs must.

Plato attributes much to this Art in a Natural Way; and for my own part, I think, as the Ancient esteem'd this Art of Divining too much, so we esteem it too little; since, as many of their Observations concerning *Auguries*, were either superstitious, or vain, or devised only to abuse the People:

so

ſo, on the other ſide, uſeful Obſervations might have been taken from thoſe Signs, the Event whereof followed in a conſtant method and way.

Theſe Arts have been very ancient, eſpecially in *Italy*, *Greece*, and *Aſia* minor; where one *Car* or *Cara* is ſaid to have invented them, and *Orpheus* to have multiply'd them: for as they there wanted the knowledge of Divination by the Stars, in that perfection as the *Egyptians* and *Chaldeans* had it, ſo they deviſed theſe Arts to make themſelves eſteem'd Prophets. The *Romans* learnt this Art from the *Hetruſcians*, to whom they ſent ſix Children of their beſt Families to learn their diſcipline at a place not far from *Florence*, formerly called *Feſula*, and now *Fieſoli*, where a Colledge of *Augurs* flouriſhed; Another alſo was built at *Rome*, which *Sylla* augmented to the number of 24. This being all I have to trouble you with upon this ſubject, I ſhall take my leave, and ſubſcribe my ſelf,

(*SIR*)

Your moſt faithful Friend

and Servant

BLOUNT.

e justly honoured Sir W. L.
o be left for him in the Spea-
ers Chamber, concerning the
Regulations of Corporations, and
Surrenderer of Charters, 1691.

SIR,

IF to have a Picture drawn by a *Michael Angelo*, a *Raphael*, or by the hand of ſome eminent Maſter, be an advantage to the Perſon for whom it is drawn; then certainly it is no leſs an Honour for a Country to be ſo well repreſented in Parliament, as ours is by you. Foreign Courts have no better a taſte of the Wiſdom and Grandeur of their Neighbouring Princes, than from the Ambaſſadors they ſend: nor can any thing be a greater Teſtimony of the Loyalties, Prudence and Integrity, either of Country, City, or Corporation, than the Election of ſuch Magiſtrates, as are both Loyal, Prudent and honeſt; who (like your ſelf) have no other Intreſt, but the true ſervice of their King, and thoſe whom they repreſent; as well maintaining the

Pre-

Prerogative of the one, as ſupporting the Liberty of the other; wherein, as by the King's Prerogative, I mean not his ſingle Will, or (as Divines pretend) a power to do what he liſt, only the King's Law, or a Law relating *particularly to himſelf*: ſo likewiſe, by the Peoples Liberty, I mean not the Licentiouſneſs of a Mobb, but only a Liberty according to Law, whereby we might aſſert our Rights, and maintain our Freeholds; which Liberty has been too lately in danger of being devour'd, not ſo much by Foreigners and *Papiſts*, as by our own Natives, and thoſe too, who have the Impudence to call themſelves *Proteſtants*, even without bluſhing: I mean our late Regulators of Corporations, and Surrenderers of Charters, in the two former Reigns, upon whoſe account it is, that I preſume to give you this preſent trouble, as hearing it will be the next Buſineſs upon which your Houſe deſigns to fall; and hope the Offences are not ſo long paſt, but that, *Parthian* like, you may yet ſhoot back ſome puniſhments upon the Offenders: ſince 'tis but reaſonable, that they who mortgaged the Kingdom in the laſt Reign, ſhould pay the Intreſt of their Crimes in this.

Therefore, *Sir*, with ſubmiſſion, I do humbly conceive, that to make the *Church of England* concern'd in the preſervation of

the late Regulators of Corporations, or ſurrenderers of Charters, is one of the greateſt Indignities can be put upon her: and ſomething like reviving the old Popiſh Law of *Sanctuaries*, making her once more become (as it were,) an *Aſylum* or place of Refuge for the moſt notorious Malefactors. Pardon me, if it be an Error, to joyn theſe Regulators & Surrenderers together; I do but imitate Nature herein, and am unwilling to make a ſeparation between the Arm that gives the ſtrength, and the Hand that gives the Blow. The Charter of each Corporation was the undoubted Right and Freehold of the ſame, as well as of every individual Member of the ſame: wherefore he that had any hand in Surrendring or delivering up ſuch a Charter, did, what in him lay, to betray, nay, to rob the people of their Inheritances. And if the *Church of England* can be ſupported only by ſuch ill men, the Lord have mercy upon her! if a Father of a Family has one Son that proves an Extravagant, and ſells his birth-right, may not that Son be diſinherited without a total Ruin to the whole Family? I hope the Church of *England* has many more Sons, and many better Friends to ſtand by her, than thoſe who were concern'd in ſo foul an Action: And that it does not follow by conſequence, *If we ſeclude all ill men from the Government, none but*

Fa-

Fanaticks would be left in—No, I will not, I cannot do ſo much honour to that Party, as to admit of ſuch an Objection.

Of how great importance an honeſt, impartial and duly elected Houſe of Commons is to this Nation, every Body well knows: and the ill effects of the contrary, I think, is unknown to no body. My old Lord *Burleigh* us'd to ſay, *We can never be throughly ruin'd, but by a Parliament.* They may cut the Throats of us and our Poſterity by a Law; whereas all other Arbitrary Acts of Violence or Tyranny in a Prince, will either vaniſh by his Death, or blow over with every adverſe Gale of Fortune that attacks him. And this (undoubtedly) was well known to thoſe Inſtruments in the laſt Reigns, who were ſo zealouſly affected for the regulating Corporations, that they would not have left one man amongſt them, who ſhould not *Jurare in Verba Magiſtri*, have done as a *Popiſh* King and his *Popiſh* Councils had dictated to them. So that, I confeſs, I cannot but couple theſe Regulators or Surrenderers together with thoſe Judges and other Gentlemen of the Long Robe, who were for the *Annihilating* and Diſpencing Power. Since, theſe were the only ſort of men, who (in thoſe times,) laid the Ax to the Root of the Tree: Theſe were the men that were to have hewn down our

Government, and burnt both it and us in *Smithfield* Fire: Theſe were the men that ſhould have plunder'd the Rights of each Corporation: and then, (like ſo many *Catalines*, to ſecure the Ills that they had done, by doing greater ſtill,) have ſent up ſuch Members to Parliament, ſuch Repreſentatives, ſuch truly Repreſentatives of themſelves, as ſhould have confirm'd their own Iniquities by a Law; in ſo much as, the honeſt Subject of *England* was, at that time, but like a Traveller fallen into the hands of Thieves, who firſt take away his Money, and then to ſecure themſelves, take away his Life: They Rob him by Providence, and then murder him by Neceſſity. The *Caſuiſts* (as one obſerves,) do well diſtinguiſh, when they ſay, *He that lies with his Mother commits Inceſt; but he who marries his Mother does worſe, by applying God's Ordinance to his Sin.* In like manner He that commits Murder with the Sword of Juſtice, aggravates his Crime to the higheſt Degree: As theſe Gentlemen of whom I have been ſpeaking, would have done, in making the Government *Felo de ſe*, and Acceſſary to its own Ruin.

Sir, all that I can ſay of this matter is, that certainly never was a greater Rape committed upon any Government, and therefore I doubt not of your Intreſt to have the

the Delinquents brought to a Condign Puniſhment, for the Exemplary Benefit of future Ages: which that they may be, is the hearty deſire of,

(*SIR*)

Your moſt obliged

humble Servant

BLOUNT.

Poſſibly, *Sir*, a motion of a General Puniſhment, may produce a General Pardon; wherefore it will be the ſureſt way, to reſt ſatisfied with making Example of ſome few of the moſt notorious and Capital Offenders. And further, that all Perſons (how obnoxious ſoever in this caſe) who yet refus'd to take away the Penal Laws and Teſt, might be exempt from any Puniſhment whatever; that at the ſame time you reprove an ill Action, you may reward that which was good.

To Dr. R. B.----*of a God.*

I Have perus'd your Arguments for the proof of a Deity, but think that you undertook a needleſs trouble, ſince I'm confident there's no manof ſenſe that doubts whether there be a God or no. The Philoſophers of Old of the *Theodorean ſect*, that had ſpent all their time and ſtudy to eſtabliſh the contrary as a truth, when they came to dye confuted all their Arguments by imploring ſome Deity; as *Bion* in particular: I know not whether the *Idea* of a God be *Innate* or no, but I'm ſure that it is very ſoon imprinted in the minds of Men; and I muſt beg Mr. *Lock*'s pardon if I very much queſtion thoſe Authorities he quotes from the Travels of ſome men, who affirm ſome Nations to have no notions of Deity; ſince the ſame has been ſaid of the Inhabitants of the *Cape of Good Hope*, which the laſt account of that place proves to be falſe. And if there be a God, the neceſſary Qualities that muſt be granted him, will not permit a man that reaſons right of things to queſtion his Care

Care and Providence over humane Affairs. Tho'. I confeſs it a ſuperficial way of Diſpute; the *Epicureans* may ſeem to have ſome Reaſon to conclude, that the Deity has no care of mankind, becauſe the confuſion in humane affairs, and the general triumphs of Wrong over Right, the prepoſterous endeavours of men in the perſuit of Happineſs, (which conſiſting in mutual offices, yet they doing one another what miſchief they can, by the means deſtroy the end, and bring all things into ſuch a confuſion) would perſwade it, and almoſt make one think, if what the *Pythagoreans* and *Chaldeans* held of Souls were true, *viz.* That they were created in Heaven, and thence tranſmitted to the Bodies for puniſhment, that we are Devils, our Malice to each other, our abounding Villanies gave ſome occaſion for ſuch thoughts. This conſideration gave that Beauty to the beginning of *Claudians in Rufinum*, which a certain Critick admired ſo much, that he ſaid, he that had a mind to be a *Poet*, ſhould ſettle that perfectly in his memory, *viz.*

Sæpe mihi dubiam traxit ſententia mentem
Curarent ſuperi terras an ullus ineſſet
Rector an incerto fluerent Mortalia Caſu, &c.

The

The form and beauty of the Universe would not let the considering *Heathens* doubt but there was a God; but the confusion of humane affairs, made others think they were left to Chance. Tho' if they had throughly considred the mater, they must have thought first that since all the rest of the Inanimate, and meerly Corporeal Substances, not dignified with understanding, by the exact and regular Order they observe, discover some divine Disposer and Providence; that certainly man evidently more excellent, and not be wholly destitute of all regard of Providence, or indeed be thought to have less than the more ignoble Beings. Next, that if they confessed a God, they must not deprive him of his necessary perfections, and certainly a Providence over his Works is one.

Having said all this, I may venture to tell you, that the very foundation of your Arguments will not hold, since you pretend to demonstrate it in your Analytick Method from the existence of Man: you begin thus. 1. Humane Kind that now inhabits the Earth, did not always exist, as all Histories make appear, asserting Man had a beginning. This they not only plainly testifie, but imply the same thing by the series of those things, which they deliver; for there is no History that pre-

tends

tends to give an account of the transactions of above six Thousand years or thereabouts.

This being the first step of your Progression, and which being removed, all the rest falls to the Ground: give me leave to tell you, that all things that are not self-evident, should be prov'd, or not pass upon us in Philosophy; but this, you have laid for your foundation is so far from being self-evident, that it is extreamly controvertible. For tho' our Chronology in less than six thousand years come up to the Creation, that of *Eusebius* being the longest, and the only that exceeds that sum. Yet this takes not in all Nations, and if it did, the Argument is weak, since 'tis possible there may have been Histories of them that reached farther, tho' now lost. Or perhaps they kept no Records, for the uncertainty of the *Greek* Chronology before the *Olympiads*, shews us they came but late to a regular observation of time. And the *Roman* Histories can give us no assurance or certainty, when or by whom *Rome* was built. *Livy* tells us of *Romulus* and *Remus*, *Salust*, says, the *Trojans* built it, and concludes it uncertain: I know as to the time they are more positive, reckoning *ab urbe condita*, tho' I can't think there can be an absolute certainty of their computation,

since

ſince that was begun ſome years at leaſt after its Foundation.

Beſides, to draw an Argument from this, that becauſe we have no Hiſtory that exceeds ſix thouſand years, therefore the World was not before, is all one as if I ſhould ſay, that becauſe the *Goths*, *Vandals*, and other barbarous Nations were not known till the time of the *Roman* Empe-perors, therefore they were not in being before.

But ſince our Correſpondence with *China*, we have found they have Records & Hiſtories of four or ſix thouſand years date before our Creation of the World; and who knows but ſome other Nations may be found out hereafter, that may go farther, and ſo on. Nay, the *Chineſe* themſelves in a traditional account, tell us, That the Poſterity of *Panzon*, and *Panzona*, inhabited the Earth 96000 years. The *Bramins* of *Guzarat* ſaid the year 1639, that there had paſt 326669 Ages, each Age conſiſting of a number of years, and if I miſtake not Centurys. Nay the *Egyptians* in the time of their King *Amaſis* Contemporary with *Cyrus*, had the Records, and Story of 13000 years, and a ſucceſſion of 330 Kings, which ſhews they were not Lunary years.

But you may ſay after all theſe accounts they ſettle ſome beginning of it: true, they pre-

pretend to have Records of no more; but it follows not from thence that there had been no other Ages before, whose Records, if they kept any, were lost, or of no use: and a good reason for the loss of the Records of Countrys, is the several Revolutions they have been subject to. The Inhabitants of the Earth changing their places from one part of it to another, as if there were a necessary Circulation in that, as in the Blood of Man, and the Waters of Rivers, *&c.* Next, the Earth and Sea, in process of time some very able Philosophers hold, have changed places; and in the destruction of Countries by these several ways, their Records may very well be supposed to be lost. Besides, the Languages and Characters altering, they would be of no use to Posterity; so if spared in the havock of Time, permitted to perish afterward. As in the Kingdom of *Trigremaen* in *Æthiopia*, superior in *Africa*; where in the City of *Caxumo*, the *Auxume* of *Ptolomy*, there are now Obelisks full of engraved Characters, which none of the *Africans* can read; as there are also on the Coasts of *Safola*.

Mr.

Mr. *L. Clerk* has ſplit upon the ſame Rock with you: I would therefore deſire you to conſider this Point a little more ſeriouſly, and build your Demonſtration of a thing of this Conſequence on a firmer Baſis, elſe inſtead of promoting the Cauſe, you eſpouſe, you only give advantages to thoſe who would be thought at leaſt to be what they are not. I hope you'l pardon this freedom of,

SIR

Your Friend,

and humble Servant

CHAR. GILDON.

To

To Charles Blount *Esq.*

AFter so many Favors, you must think me a very impudent Beggar indeed, to importune you for more; but as I'm sensible the Benefits you bestow are the effects of a generous Nature, so I persuade my self, that the pleasure you have in conferring them, lessen the assurance of my asking; especially in a disquisition of this Nature, which may afford a more substantial profit to my Mind, than Favors of another kind, which I must always acknowledge I owe to you; and none wou'd be a greater, than your employing me in something that may be serviceable to you, for then I shall be able to convince you, that my Will extends beyond a bare Acknowledgment.

I have often doubted whether there were any such thing as a pure Spirit independant of all Body and Matter: And, I must own, I think that there can be no such thing as 'tis *vulgarly* apprehended. For what *Idea* can we form of it? *Thought*, generally taken for the *Essence* of the Soul, seems only the

the *Action*, or an *Accident* of it, ſince the *Mind* is often without it, as *Body* without *Motion*, or any particular *Modification* of it. So that we may conſider the *Soul* without *Thought*, but not *Thought* without ſome Subject to in here in (unleſs by Abſtraction) no more than roundneſs without ſome round Body. And why the *Intima Naturą*, that compoſes the *Matter*, which goes to the making up that definition of *Body*, as Extenſion, Diviſibility, Impenetrability, ſhou'd be incapable of receiving the accident of *Thought*, I can find no Reaſon; for being ignorant of the nature of thoſe *contiguous Particles* of *Matter* that are extended diviſible, and impenetrable, how can we pretend to decide it magiſterially againſt this Opinion, eſpecially ſince Memory, Wit and Judgment, the nobleſt *Qualities* of the *MIND*, are agreed by the Naturaliſts, (as is evident from Phyſic) to have ſo great a dependance on the Mechaniſm of the Brain, *&c.* And to ſhew plainly that we are ignorant of this inmoſt nature of things, one Example may ſuffice, ſince we take the definition from certain *general Qualities* we diſcover in Matter. As for Example, a Seed of Pepper—— we ſee 'tis *extended*, *diviſible*, and *impenetrable*; but we diſcover not what that quality of heating the mouth is compos'd of, or proceeds from; or what ſecret power thoſe Particles have, to affect the Senſe

Senſe in that manner. So in all other things 'tis not *Extenſion*, &c. that compoſe the *Body*, but ſome other occult thing we know not what, of which *Extenſion*, &c. are the conſequence, whether it be the congregation of Atoms, or other inviſible Particles of *Matter* ſolid or ſubtle, tho' it muſt be confeſs'd that even the leaſt of theſe Atoms has the ſame Qualities; but yet it muſt be alſo granted, they have other Qualitys probably not leſs in number, which we know nothing of; ſo that when I term *Extenſion*, &c. the conſequence of thoſe occult *Qualities* we know not, I mean a co-exiſtent conſequence, as the conſequence of a ſelf-evident Principle. But if the *Soul* be not *Matter*, tho' more fine and ſubtle than the *Body*, 'tis very ſtrange the chief Part of us ſhou'd be of ſuch a nature that we can form no *Idea* of it. But 'tis ſtranger yet, that Men ſhou'd think it ſo neceſſary to believe ſo, when a more obvious and intelligible Opinion wou'd anſwer all the ends of Religion as well. They muſt acknowledge the *Soul* a Subſtance, and we have no *Idea* of Subſtance diſtinct from that of Body. If they have any, they would do well to impart it to the groſſer underſtandings of the reſt of the World.

But theſe Gentlemen that advance this Opinion of pure immaterial Subſtances, truſt to Fancy, and meer Conjectures, which they can

can give no account at all of, but by *one only Accident*, viz. *THOUGHT*; which they can never demonſtrate incapable of inhering in Body modefy'd to that purpoſe, tho' not in all Bodies; for I think Mr. *Bently's* far from Demonſtrations, ſince they riſe only to a *Probability*. But by making *Thought* the Eſſence of the *Soul*, they diſtinguiſh it not from that of Beaſts; for they think, and have perhaps ſomething equivalent to Reaſon, or muſt at leaſt be granted equal to Idects. Nay, this proves, that either *Thought* and *Matter* are not incompatible; or that the Eſſence of the *Souls* of Men and Beaſts is the ſame, and by conſequence both mortal, or both immortal, for they both think. Beſides, ſince 'tis evident from this uncontrovertible Maxim, *Nemo dat quod non habet*, that the Qualities of all things; and therefore of *Body*, are in God himſelf (that is in an infinite degree of perfection) the moſt pure of Spirits, 'tis not likely that Body ſhou'd be derogatory to the purity of infinitely inferior Spirits.

On this Corporiety of Spirits depends a more obvious Explanation of two Texts of Scripture, than I have met with in any of the vulgar and general Comments (ſuppoſing the Book of *Geneſis* a true Hiſtory of matter of Fact, and no Parable, as Dr. *Burnet* contends in his *Archiologiæ*) *If the Angels have Bodies, we may, without Abſurdity,*

ſup-

ſuppoſe them to generate with Women, and ſo the Sons of God might enter with the Daughters of men, and beget a Race of Gyants on them. For 'tis unaccountable to me, that none but the Daughters of Iniquity (as the vulgar Interpreters will have it) *ſhou'd be capable of bearing ſo robuſt a Generation.* The other place is in the Epiſtles of St. *Paul*, where he enjoins *the Women to be cover'd in the Church becauſe of the Angels.* For the Church being the more peculiar place of the Miniſtry of Angels, they might, perhaps, by the beauty of that Sex, be diverted from their Duty. This Opinion would reſtore the Free-will to the Angels, which I can't conceive ſhou'd be ſo abſolutely neceſſary for the juſtification of Man, as the Clergy would perſuade us, and yet not at all requiſite to that of Angels. If Free-will was taken from them on the Fall, of one part of 'em, they met with a more indulgent Fate than Man, who ſtill poſſeſſes it to his Ruine.

Theſe Conſiderations ſuggeſt an odd extravagant Thought, which I muſt ſet down, if it be but to make you laugh, and, I hope, you'l pardon my impertinent freedom- ——
The Thought is this ——

Who knows but this Race of Men was firſt of Angelic Degree, till by the bewitching Smiles of *Woman* (the moſt lovely Brute

of

of the Universe) betray'd to Mortality i
her Embraces. And then perhaps *Columb*
might be the first of the Sons of *Noah*, tha
enter'd the new discover'd World of *Ame*
rica, which might be a Race deriv d fro
some other deluded Angels, won by th
same destructive Bait.

Pardon me if I think the *Pandora* of th
Heathens (to say nothing of our *Eve*) ma
favour this *Imagination*.

But these are only indigested Thoughts, I
dare neither yield nor deny my Assent to
till I know your Judgment, which has a ver
great Influence over,

SIR,

Your much obliged Friend,

And humble Servant,

CHARLES GILDON.

To

To Mr. B. *Fellow of*-----*Colledge.*

IN the laſt you honoured me with, you ſaid you were now giving your ſelf to the ſtudy of Philoſophy, which makes me deſire you to give me your Thoughts upon theſe following Heads, in as brief a manner as may be.

1. Whether there be a Succeſſion in Eternity, or i be as *Boetius* defines it *Interminabilis vitæ tota ſimul & perfecta poſſeſſio*, but he building his Opinion with the reſt of the old *Platoniſts* on a falſe Suppoſition, ſeems to me in the wrong: For they imagin'd that it would be incompatible with the Immutability of God, not to have his whole Exiſtence to be all once, his duration meaſur'd, as Mr. *Cowly* does by the Phraſe of *An Eternal now*, becauſe they thought by ſucceſſion he muſt looſe thoſe parts that are paſt, and gain thoſe that are to come, and only enjoy the preſent. But the Imperfection of Succeſſion in Creatures is no good Argument that it muſt be ſo in God; for 'tis true that they both receive and looſe by it, becauſe as they

grow old, they acquire or are depriv'd of ſome property, which cannot happen in God. But that which makes moſt for this Opinion, is that ſince the contrary is not built on Revelation, there is no Reaſon we ſhould implicitly yield our aſſent to it on the bare Authority of the *Platoniſts*, unleſs they could make us underſtand it; for I defy any one to think of Eternity without the Idea of Succeſſion.

2. As to the Origin of *Good* and *Evil*, methinks 'tis leſs contradictory, and unreaſonable to believe as the Antient *Peaſians* did, that there were two beginnings of things, the one *Good*, and the other *Evil*. For how can Evil proceed from a Being infinitely Good, and without whom nothing is, if *Evil* be not? And if Dr. *Burnet* has prov'd *Geneſis* but a Parable, why may not the *Perſians* be as much in the right as the *Jews*.

3. Suppoſing the Soul Immaterial, why may not Material Fire have an operation on it, ſince the Body ſo much influences it in this Life.

4. I would fain know what Reaſon ſome men have (and thoſe Philoſophers) to term any one quality in God more excellent than an other; for certainly let the number be

be infinite, ſo muſt the perfection of each be, elſe the Infinite Being would in ſome be leſs Infinite, or rather Finite; for I think there's no medium betwixt Infinite, and Finite; nor any difference can I diſcover betwixt two equally infinite Qualities. If therefore the Qualities of all things are, and by conſequence originally were (for God's Qualitys can neither encreaſe nor ſuffer diminution) in God, as it may be evidently prov'd, then it follows that thoſe of Body are of equal excellency with thoſe of Spirits, ſince equally in him, and all the Qualities of God are infinitly perfect.

5. The opinion of the Plurality of Worlds ſeems more agreeable to God's infinite (for ſo muſt all God's Qualities be) communicative Quality to be continually making new Worlds, ſince other ways this Quality or Act of Creating would be only once exerted, and for infinite duration lie uſeleſs and dormant. But it ſeems ſtrange, that only once this Infinite deſire of Communicating his Infinite Glory ſhould be put in practice, and that only to ſo little, and inconſiderable a Number as all the Sons of *Adam* can make up, in compariſon of Infinity. The opinion of Plurality of Worlds does at leaſt give us a more Auguſt Idea of the Wiſdom and Power of God, and of his infinit

Perfections, than to imagine all that Infinite Extenſion ſhould be like a barren Heath, without any Productions of the Infinite Being, and not fill'd with Infinite and Endleſs Worlds.

But theſe are Doubts enough to be reſolv'd in one better, if you will anſwer them, I ſhall be extreamly oblig'd to you, ſince they are deſign'd for the publick view; and I would willingly have them reſolv'd, of which I'm ſenſible you are very capable. I am

Your oblieg'd

humble Servant,

C. GILDON.

Of

To CHARLES BLOUNT *Esq;*

Of Natural Religion, as opposed to Divine Revelation.

NAtural Religion is the Belief we have of an eternal intellectual Being, and of the Duty which we owe him, manifested to us by our Reason, without Revelation or positive Law: The chief Heads whereof seem contain'd in these few Particulars.

1. *That there is one infinite eternal God, Creator of all Things.*
2. *That he governs the World by Providence.*
3. *That 'tis our Duty to worship and obey him as our Creator and Governor.*
4. *That our Worship consists in Prayer to him, and Praise of him.*
5. *That our Obedience consists in the Rules of Right Reason, the Practice whereof is Moral Virtue:*
6. *That we are to expect Rewards and Punishments hereafter, according to our Actions in this Life; which includes the Soul's Immortality, and is proved by our admitting Providence.*

Seventhly, That when we err from the Rules of our Duty, we ought to Repent, and truſt in God's mercy for Pardon.

That Rule which is neceſſary to our future Happineſs, ought to be generally made known to all men.

But no Rule of Revealed Religion was, or ever could be made known to all men.

Therefore no Revealed Religion is neceſſary to future Happineſs.

The Major is thus prov'd:

Our Future Happineſs depends upon our obeying, or endeavouring to fulfil the known Will of God.

But that Rule which is not generally known, cannot be generally obey'd.

Therefore that Rule which is not generally known, cannot be the Rule of our Happineſs.

Now the Minor of the firſt Syllogiſm is matter of Fact, and uncontrovertible, that no Religion ſupernatural has been conveyed to all the World; witneſs the large Continent of *America*, not diſcover'd till within this two Hundred Years; where if there were any Revealed Religion, at leaſt it was not the *Chriſtian*.

And if it be objected to the whole, That the ways of God's dealing with the *Heathen* as to Eternal Mercy, are unknown to any; and that he will Judge them by the Law

of

of Nature, or (in other terms) the Rules of Natural Religion or Morality. We urge again, that either thoſe Laws of Natural Religion are ſufficient, if kept, to Happineſs; or they who could know no more, are out of a poſſibility of a future ſtate of Bleſſedneſs: becauſe they could not comply with Laws they know not: And in ſaying this, they deny God's Infinite Goodneſs, which provides for all his Creatures the means of attaining that Happineſs, whereof their Natures are capable. Again, if they urge, that Natural Religion is ſufficient, but not poſſible to be lived up to. The ſame anſwer falls more heavy upon them; That then there is no viſible means left for the greater part of Mankind to be happy: And to do our duty according to what we are able, is but a cold comfort, if we have no Aſſurance or Hope at leaſt in the means we have laid before us.

Now if they infer, that therefore a Revealed Religion is neceſſary, becauſe the Natural will not ſuffice, is to beg the Queſtion, and to begin again the Diſpute: for we hold that a Natural Religion will ſuffice for our Happineſs; becauſe it is the only general means propoſed. And tho' we affirm not that we can wholly live up to it; yet that a general expiation is diſcovered in the Natural Religion, *viz.* Penitence,

nitence, and Resolution of Amendment that we acknowledge.

Sir *Charles Wolfy* tells us what is most true, that Mankind in all Ages has app'ved to God, as guilty and Offenders; that all have agreed an Expiation was necessary, but look'd up to him for the Revealation of it: wherefore they used several Sacrifices and Lustrations, which they had, or thought they had revealed.

This I think so weak an Argument for a revealed Religion, that it serves rather to destroy it, because, that granting all Ages have thought an Expiation necessary, yet first their differing in the outward means, shew'd the means was uncertain; And if there had been any outward Expiation necessary, it must have been known generally, or the force of the first Argument holds good, namely, that it is not possible for the greatest part of Mankind to be happy hereafter, where the means of compassing it was known to them.—— But, 2*dly*, these several Expiations were indeed all but Symbolical, and refer'd to our Sorrow and Repentance: That it is the true and only Expiation of Sin, and is so agreed upon by all men in all Ages, and of all Religions, wherefore take it for an undoubted Truth: and this not reveal'd, but innate, and a part of Natural Religion.

The

The ſame may be ſaid of the Doctrinal part of it: Thus are the things generally known and believ'd; but all end in the practice of Vertue, and Reverence of the Deity.

Now all Reveal'd Religions are different from each other; and you cannot prove any one of them to be truer than the reſt, before you can prove that one of them muſt be true; and if once known true, mankind would all agree in it; otherwiſe thoſe marks of Truth in it were not viſible, which are neceſſary to draw an unviverſal aſſent.

For Rewards and Puniſhments hereafter, the Notion of them has not been univerſally receiv'd; for the *Heathens* diſagreed in the Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul: But grant that they ſeem reaſonable, becauſe they are deduced from the Doctrine of Providence, which the moſt Rational of the *Heathens* held: For if God governs all things, he is juſt, becauſe it is a part of Infinite Perfection; and if ſo, he either rewards here, or hereafter; but not always here, therefore hereafter. Yet if they who hold Revelation, will grant that they are parts of Natural and unreveal'd Religion, becauſe the wiſeſt men have inclin'd to hold them amongſt the *Heathen*, and now do in all Opinions; then it follows that by living up to the Dictates

of Reaſon and Penitence, when we fail in ſo doing, men may be happy in a future ſtate, without any help of Revealed Religion, which is all I contend for.

The great Objections againſt the validity of Natural Religion to Eternal Happineſs, ſeem to be theſe.

1. That this Doctrine was never generally held in any Age; and therefore ſeems not to carry that light of Moral certainty in it, which we hold neceſſary to eſtabliſh the truth of a Religion: for we ſay that Religion is only true, which is or may be reaſonable, and convincing to all men; now if it be not generally held, it appears not convincing.

This Objection has not really the weight in it, which it ſeems to carry at firſt ſight; for 'tis evident that many men of all Religions at this day, have center'd in the Opinion of Natural Religion, and its ſufficiency of Happineſs. The *Heathen* Philoſophers and Poets (who were the firſt Prieſts) did at the bottom acknowledge Vertue to be the guide of all our Actions; and all their Myſteries referr'd to a good Life, and to Repentance. At this day the learned in all Religions hold the ſame: this they agree in; in the outward Ceremonies of every Religion, they are every man

man content to Conform to thoſe of their own Country. Which is an Argument for us, that whatever new Religions have ſprung up, yet they have all retain'd this part thereof, *viz.* that they have diſagreed amongſt themſelves.

'Tis confeſt that whole Nations have never follow'd our Opinion: but how many of a Nation ever conſider to the bottom of any Religion! that which is eſtabliſh'd draws the vulgar, who enquires not beyond it. And, beſides, our Opinion is ſo Charitable, that we do not exclude any Diſſenters from eternal Happineſs: God may be pleas'd with different Worſhips, becauſe we ſay that all Worſhips are included in Prayer, Praiſe, exerciſe of Vertue and Penitence, when we have done amiſs: So that the foundation being the ſame, we labour not in the Superſtructures, which are only the Modes and Circumſtances of Religion.

2. The next Objection againſt the Sufficiency of Natural Religion to Happineſs eternal, is only a bare Affirmation of our Adverſaries, That Natural Religion is but an imperfect Light, which God gives us ſo far, as that by improving it, we may arrive at a Supernatural Knowledge. As ſuppoſe I were going to *Whitehall* from *Covent-garden* Church, and can then ſee only

to

to the end of the *Strand* before me, but coming thither, am directed further.

But I wholly deny any Natural Light can lead me to a Supernatural; there is no proportion betwixt those two extreams: There is a Gulph betwixt, a μέγα χασμα: And 'tis not so easy a passage as from *Covent-garden* to *Whitehall*; 'tis rather from *Covent-Garden* to some place beyond the *Calum Empyræum*, and wholly out of the boundaries of Nature. Also to prove that God can reveal to me what is farther Necessary, when I have us'd my best Natural Endeavours, is only to prove that God is Omnipotent and Infinite; but proves not that tis necessary he should or will do it: for *a posse ad esse non valet Consequentia.* I have already endeavoured to prove that it is not necessary he should reveal more; and therefore till that point be determin'd στάσει I humbly doubt and suspend my Belief.

3. Another Objection may be this: That there is no foundation in Natural Religion for a vertuous Life; or at least not so great as in a Revealed Religion, where Rewards and Punishments are propos'd. So that a meer Moral Man upon bare Vertue, will be discouraged when he sees Vertue not rewarded here.

A ſecond Objection is, That there is a difference betwixt our condition, and that of the *Heathens*: for if they liv'd up to the heighth of Vertue and known Reaſon, they might (ſay ſome charitable *Chriſtians*) be happy in a future condition: We cannot, becauſe a revealed Religion has been diſcover'd to us, more then to them, tho' we believe it not: Therefore we ought in our own defence to embrace it, becauſe that by the Principles of a Natural Religion we grant, that thoſe of a reveal'd may be ſaved: but they of the reveal'd deny that ſafety to us. (A fooliſh Catholick *Argument.*)

To the firſt Objection we Anſwer: That Rewards and Puniſhments are acknowledg'd in Natural Religion, and are to expect them in a future Life anſwerable to our Actions here; and according to the Juſtice and Mercy of the great Creator. And till you prove they are inconſiſtent with the doctrine of Natural Religion, we need anſwer no further to your Argument.

To the ſecond Objection; It ſuppoſes like the other; firſt, a Supernatural Religion, which is to prove. And if the *Heathens* living up to the height of Natural Religion, might be eternally happy, I ſee no reaſon but why we may be ſo too; for

if

if our Happineſs depends upon our Belief, we cannot firmly believe till our Reaſon be convinced of a Supernatual Religion: And if the Reaſons of it were evident, there could be no longer any Contention about Religion: All men would embrace the ſame, and acquieſce in it; no prejudice would prevail againſt the certainty of a future good. 'Tis every mans greateſt buſineſs here to labour for his Happineſs, and conſequently none would be backward to know the means.

For the Inference, namely, that tho' a Supernatural Religion be dubious, yet 'tis the ſafeſt way to embrace it. I *firſt* Anſwer That I cannot embrace what comes not within the compaſs of my knowledge: And if I cannot believe, 'tis a ſign the Evidence is not ſtrong enough to make me. And *ſecondly*,

Two Arguments there are, which Sir *Ch. Wolſy* calls *Demonſtrations* to prove a Reveal'd Religion: ——

The firſt is, *The Notion of Sin, or deviation from good in all men; a repugnant Principle to Vertue; a lapſe from our firſt eſtate, wherein God, who is all good, muſt needs create us, and which the World has generrlly acknowledg'd by Luſtrations and Sacrifices to appeaſe the Deity:* This he ſays, *we can know by no other Light but Revelation*, &c.

Secondly,

Secondly, *The approaches to God, and propitiation muſt be immediately and ſupernatually diſcover'd, how he will be appeas'd.*

To the firſt, I Anſwer; This generally acknowledg'd Lapſe of Nature that it came may be diſcover'd by Nature, *viz.* by Natural Reaſon; how it came, 'tis reaſonable to conclude without Revelation, namely, by a deviation from the right Rule of Reaſon implanted in us: how he came to deviate from this Rule or Lapſe, proceeds from the Nature of Goodneſs, originally given us by our Creator; which Reaſon tells to be an arbitrary ſtate of goodneſs only, therefore not a Neceſſary Goodneſs to which our Natures were conſtrain'd. In ſhort, our fall proceeds from our not being able to reaſon rightly on every thing we act; and with ſuch Beings we were created: For all our Actions are deſign'd by us to ſome good which may ariſe to us; but we do not always diſtinguiſh rightly of that good: we often miſtake the *Bonum apparens* for the *Bonum reale*,; *Decipimur ſpecie Recti*: The *Bonum jucundum* is preferr'd for want of Right Reaſoning to the *Bonum honeſtum*; and the *Bonum vicinum* (tho' it be the leſs in it ſelf) often carries it before the *Bonum remotum*: which is greater in its own Nature. No Man ever held, that we could *appetere malum quà malum*:

lum: And therefore I will not grant him a total Lapſe in our Natures from God; for we ſee many born with virtuous Inclinations. And tho' all Men at ſome times err, even the beſt in their Actions; it only ſhews, that we were not created to a neceſſitated goodneſs. 'Tis enough to prove no fatal Lapſe, that many are proved thro' the courſe of their Lives, more prone to do Good than Ill; and that all Men do Ill only for want of right Reaſoning, becauſe the Will neceſſarily follows the laſt Dictate of the Underſtanding.

To the Second; Namely, *That the Propitiation for our Offences muſt be ſupernaturally diſcover'd, or elſe we can come upon no certain Terms of Acceptation with God.*

I anſwer that which I have often hinted, *viz.* That all the World who have agreed upon the Fault, agree upon the Compenſation; namely, Sorrow and a true Repentance: And Reaſon dictates this without Revelation. The World indeed has differ'd in their Luſtrations and Sacrifices; but more have in all Ages agreed, that theſe without Repentance were nothing, and Repentance without them was valid: But that bare Repentance is ſufficient Compenſation for an infinite Offence againſt an infinite Being, is what our Adverſaries deny, and therefore

point

point us to an infinite Sacrifice or Propitiation for Sin, namely, Jesus Christ.

I may first answer, That till all who profess Christianity, agree whether Christ be a Propitiation or no, I need not go about a farther Refutation of their Argument; for the *Socinians* will allow him only to be set up for an Example, not as a Mediator or Sacrifice. But grant that the Offence is committed against an infinite Being, we are but finite Creatures who commit it, and Repentance is what we can answer to an Atonement; and therefore we may reasonably assert, tis all God will expect from us: Faith even in Christ, according to their Rules, being not good without it. If I owe a Million, and can pay but a Thousand Pounds, my Creditor can have but All; 'tis true, my Body is then subject to Imprisonment, that is to the farther Extent of the Law; but then that Law is void of Mercy. Now Mercy is one of the greatest Attributes of God, and I think that infinite Justice cannot be extended on a finite Creature infinitely, without a Contradiction to infinite Mercy, which is, as 'twere, God's High-Court of Equity in the Case to relieve from the extremity of the Law: for tho' God's Attributes are all infinite, and tho' his Justice be infinite as well as his Mercy; yet the infinity of his Justice is only as inherent, not as extensive as his Mercy towards

wards us, we receiving of his Juſtice but according to the meaſure of our deſerts, in puniſhment from his Mercy more than we can deſerve: As the ſtricteſt of Chriſtians hold, If that his Mercy be farther extended to us than his Juſtice, his Juſtice is not infinitely extended in puniſhing us; for nothing is infinite which another thing can go beyond. And in this I follow that Father of the Church *Origen*, who thought that by a long Purgation, the greateſt Sins might be waſh'd away, and that *Pythagoras* and *Plato* taught him

It has been demanded of me, Whether I ſhould be convinc'd of my Opinion, and admit of ſupernatural Religion, in caſe the Goſpel (*i. e.*) a ſupernatural Religion had been promulgated to all the World? I anſwer'd, I ſhould; and was contented that the whole ſtreſs of the Diſpute ſhould be terminated in that one Point. It was reply'd, That then if it could be proved that this nniverſal Revelation was unneceſſary, I ought to acquieſce; I granted that alſo.

'Twas then urg'd, That this Revelation was not thought neceſſary by Almighty God, becauſe he foreknew that none of thoſe Heathens, or whoſoever elſe would live up to the heighth of their natural Reaſon or Religion, and that therefore it was not reaſonable that they ſhould receive this ſupernatural Help; wherefore it was concluded

cluded, that they were all damned eternally.

I anſwer; This is to dive too far in God's Secrets, to conclude them all damned in all Ages, to whom that revealed LIght came not. The Apoſtle ſays, *They ſhall be judged by the Law of Nature*; but he ſays not, They ſhall be damn'd. Neither will they or can they be call'd of themſelves, unleſs the means had been offered to them as well as to us. Alſo by the ſame Reaſon, all to whom this Revelation is come, ſhall be ſaved; becauſe it was revealed to none who were not worthy of it: For if he foreknew that no one of the Heathens ſhould live up to the worth of this new Light, and therefore deny'd it to them all, then he who makes no diſtinction of perſons, would only have reveal'd it to thoſe who ſhould be ſaved: But our Adverſaries confeſs that this Light is reveal'd to many as ſhall not be ſaved among the Chriſtians, as if it were only to double their Condemnation; an Opinion which totally robs God of his Attribute of Mercy, and Man is left at leaſt in a very doubting condition, if not totally deſperate.

I am, SIR,

Your Friend without Reſerve,

A. W.

To

To his Friend Mr. Gildon, *concerning the World's Age, Beginning and End.*

SIR, That Part of *Ocellus Lucanus* which I promiſed to ſend you, is what follows.

OCELLUS LUCANUS.

'MY Opinion is, That the Univerſe admitteth neither Generation nor Corruption, for it ever was and ever ſhall be; inaſmuch as if 'twere ſubject to time, it would not yet continue. For if any Man ſhould conceive it to have been made, he would not be able to find into what it ſhould be corrupted and diſſolv'd; ſince that out of which it was made, is before the Univerſe; as that into which it ſhall be corrupted, will be after the Univerſe. Beſides, the Univerſe being made, is made together with all things; and being corrupted, is corrupted together with all things; which is impoſſible: So that the Univerſe is without Beginning and Ending. Now whatſoever had a Beginning of its Production, and ought to partake of

'Diſ-

'Diſſolution, admitteth two Alterations;
'the one from that which is leſs, to that
'which is greater; and from that which is
'worſe, to that which is better; and that
'term from whence it beginneth to be al-
'ter'd, is call'd Production; as that to
'which it arriveth is called the State: The
'other Alteration is from that which is
'greater, to that which is leſs; and from
'that which is better, to that which is
'worſe: But the Period of this Alteration
'is call'd Corruption and Diſſolution. If
'therefore the whole be producible and
'corruptible, when it was produced, it was
'alter'd from that which was leſs, to that
'which was greater; and from that which
'was worſe, to that which was better: and
'conſequently will afterwards be alter'd
'from the greater to the leſs, and from
'better to worſe. So that the World being
'produced, admitted Growth & State; and
'ſhall again receive Diminution and Cor-
'ruption. For every Nature that admitteth
'Progreſs, hath three Terms, and two In-
'tervals. The three Terms are Production,
'State, and Diſſolution; but the two Inter-
'vals are, from the Production to the State,
'and from the State to the Diſſolution.
'Now the Univerſe doth of it ſelf afford
'us no ſuch evidence, ſince no one ever ſaw
'it produc'd nor alter'd either in *Aſcenſu*
'or *Deſcenſu*, but it always remain'd in the
'ſame

'ſame condition 'tis now in, equal and like
'it ſelf. The evident Signs whereof, are
'the Orders, fit Proportions, Figures, Sci-
'tuations, Intervals, Faculties, mutual ſwift-
'neſs and ſlowneſs of Motions, Numbers,
'and Periods of Times; for all ſuch things
'admit Alteration and Diminution, accord-
'ing to the Progreſs of a producible Na-
'ture: For that which is greater and bet-
'ter, accompanieth the State by reaſon of
'its Vigor; and which is leſs or worſe, ac-
'companieth the Diſſolution, by reaſon of
'its Weakneſs. Now I call the World by
'the Name of the Univerſe, which Appel-
'lation it obtaineth, in that it is framed out
'of all things, being an abſolute and perfect
'Collection of all Natures: for beſides the
'Univerſe, there is nothing; and if there
'be any thing, it is contain'd in the Uni-
'verſe, either as a part, or excreſcence
'thereof. As for thoſe things that are con-
'tain'd in the World, they have commu-
'nion with the World, but the World hath
'communion with nothing elſe beſides it
'ſelf; for all other things have not ſuch a
'Nature as is ſufficient of it ſelf, but ſtand
'in need of the communion with other
'things: As living Creatures need Reſpi-
'ration; the Eye, Light, and the other
'Senſes their ſeveral Objects; and Plants
'need the Juice of the Earth for their
'growth: Nay, the Sun, Moon, Planets, and

'fixed

'fixed Stars, ſtand in need of a certain por-
'tion of the Univerſe; only the Univerſe
'ſtands in need of no other thing beſides it
'ſelf. Now as Fire, which is able to give
'heat to other things, is of it ſelf hot; ſo
'that which is the cauſe of perfection to
'other things, is of it ſelf perfect; and
'that which is the cauſe of Safety to others,
'muſt of it ſelf be ſafe and permanent.
'Alſo that which is the cauſe ef Compacted-
'neſs to others, muſt needs of it ſelf be
'compacted: But the World is to all other
'things the cauſe of Being, Safety, and Per-
'fection; wherefore of it ſelf it muſt needs
'be eternal, perfect, and permanent for
'ever. Again, If the Univerſe be diſſolv'd,
'it muſt of neceſſity be diſſolv'd into Some-
'thing, or into Nothing; Not into Some-
'thing, inaſmuch as there will not be a
'total Corruption of the Uuiverſe, if it be
'diſſolv'd into Something: for Something
'muſt be either the Univerſe, or at leaſt a
'Part of it; nor will it be annihilated: For it
'is impoſſible that Something ſhould either
'be made of Nothing, or diſſolv'd into No-
'thing; wherefore the Univerſe can admit
'neither Production nor Corruption. Now
'if any one ſhould conceive it is corruputed,
'either it muſt be corrupted from Some-
'thing that is without the Univerſe, or from
'Something that is within; it cannot be
'from Something without it, for there is

'No-

'Nothing without the Univerſe which com-
'prehends all things, and is the World.
'Nor can it be from things that are within
'the Univerſe, for then they muſt of Ne-
'ceſſity be greater and more prevalent than
'the Univerſe, which cannot be; for all
'things are hurry'd by the Univerſe, and
'by means of it are ſaved, compacted, and
'endew'd with Life and Soul. So that if it
'comes neither by any thing without the
'World, nor within it, then it cannot be
'ſubject to Corruption and Diſſolution.
'Moreover, All Nature, if it be well con-
'ſider'd, ſeemeth to take away Continuity
'from the firſt and moſt honourable parts
'in a certain Proportion, leſsning it by de-
'grees, and applying it to all mortal things,
'as alſo admitting a Progreſs of its own
'Conſtitution, (for the firſt Bodies being
'mov'd, do in a uniform manner perform
'their Periods) I ſay, a Progreſs not con-
'tinued and local, but conſiſting in Altera-
'tion; *viz.* Condenſation and Rarefaction.
'Thus Fire being preſs'd together produ-
'ceth Air, Air Water, and Water Earth.
'Alſo from Earth there is the ſame Period
'of Alteration, till you come to Fire again,
'whence the Alteration at firſt began,
'(according to what *Hippocrates* ſaith——
'*Lumen Jovi, Tenebræ Plutoni; Lumen Plu-*
'*toni, Tenebræ Jovi:*) Likewiſe Fruits and
'Plants receiv'd their Beginning from Seeds,

'which

'which being come to maturity and per-
'fection, are again reſolv'd into Seeds, Na-
'ture making her progreſs from the ſame
'unto the ſame. But Men, and other Ani-
'mals, do in a more inferior Manner finiſh
'the progreſs of their Nature, (ſince they
'do not return to their firſt Age:) Nei-
'ther have they a reciprocal change into
'one another, as 'tis in Fire, Air, Water,
'and Earth; but after they have run thro'
'all the four aforeſaid parts of their Race,
'and paſſed their ſeveral Ages, they are
'diſſolv'd and dye, becoming in the ſame
'ſtate as they were. (*Quo non Nati Jacent*,
'as *Seneca* and *Pliny* both ſpeak.) Theſe
'therefore are Arguments ſufficient to
'prove, That the Univerſe remaineth per-
'fect and uncorrupted; as alſo that the Ex-
'creſcences and Reſults thereof, ſuffer only
'a Mutation, and not an Annihilation;
'there being no ſuch thing as *Quies in Na-*
'*tura*, all things being in a perpetual circu-
'lar Motion. Nay, that the Figure, Mo-
'tion, Time, and Subſtance thereof, are
'without Beginning and End; thereby it
'plainly appears, that the World admit-
'teth neither Production nor Diſſolution:
'for the Figure is ſpherical, and conſe-
'quently on every ſide equal, and therefore
'without Beginning or Ending. Alſo the
'Motion is circular, and conſequently
'ſtable, never ſhifting its former place. The

" Time likewiſe is infinite wherein the Motion is perform'd, as that which is mov'd had neither Beginning, nor ſhall have End; from all which it is evident, that the Univerſe admitteth neither Production nor Corruption. *Ocellus Lucanus*, chap. 1.

Now it is very much, that this Author *Ocellus Lucanus* (who for his Antiquity is held to be almoſt a Contemporary with *Moſes*, if not before him) ſhould have ſo different a Sentiment of the World's Beginning from that which *Moſes* had, methinks if *Moſes*'s Hiſtory of the Creation, and of *Adam*'s being the firſt Man, had been a general receiv'd Opinion at that time, *Ocellus Lucanus*, who was ſo ancient and ſo eminent a Philoſopher, ſhould not have been altogether ignorant thereof.

' Again, (ſaith he) as the Frame of the ' World hath been always, ſo it is neceſſary ' that its Parts ſhould likewiſe always have ' exiſted; by Parts, I mean the Heaven, ' Earth, and that which lieth betwixt, *viz.* ' the Sky; for not without theſe, but with ' theſe, and of theſe, the World conſiſts. ' Alſo if the Parts exiſt, it is neceſſary that ' the Things which are within them ſhould ' alſo coexiſt; as with the Heaven, the Sun, ' Moon, fixed Stars and Planets, with the ' Earth, Animals, Plants, Minerals, Gold ' and Silver; with the Air, Exhalations, ' Winds, and Alterations of Weather, ſome-

' times

'times Heat, and ſometimes Cold; forwith
'the World, all theſe things do, and ever
'have exiſted as Parts thereof. Nor hath
'Man had any original Production from the
'Earth or elſewhere, as ſome believe; but
'hath always been, as now he is, coexiſtent
'with the World whereof he is a part.
'Now Corruptions and violent Alterations
'are made according to the Parts of the
'Earth: ſometimes by the overflowing of
'the Sea; ſometimes with the dilating and
'parting of the Earth by Winds and Wa-
'ters impriſon'd in the Bowels thereof; but
'an univerſal Corruption of the Earth
'never hath been, nor ever ſhall be. Yet
'theſe Alterations have given occaſion for
'the invention of many Lyes and Fables.
'And thus are we to underſtand them that
'derive the Original of the *Greek* Hiſtory
'from *Inachus* the Argive: Not that he was
'really the Original thereof, as ſome make
'him; but becauſe a moſt memorable Al-
'teration did then happen, ſome were ſo
'unskilful as to make that Conſtruction
'thereof; and if any way we may believe
'*Adam* to be the firſt Man, we muſt expound
'it after this manner, *viz.* That he was the
'firſt of the whole Race. But for the Uni-
'verſe, and all the parts whereof it ſubſiſts,
'as it is at preſent, ſo it ever was, and ever
'ſhall be; one Nature perpetually moving,
'and another perpetually ſuffering; one al-

'ways governing, and the other always be-
'ing govern'd.

The courſe which Nature takes in governing the World, is by one Contrary prevailing over another, as thus———

The Moiſture in the Air prevaileth over the Drineſs of the Fire; and the Coldneſs of the Water, over the Heat of the Air; the Drineſs of the Earth, over the Moiſture of the Water; and ſo the Moiſture of the Water, over the Drineſs of the Earth; and the Heat in the Air, over the Coldneſs of the Water; and the Drineſs in the Fire, over the Moiſture of the Air. And thus the Alterations are made and produced out of one into another.

It plainly appears out of the Bible, that there were two Creations both of Man and Woman, and that *Adam* was not the firſt Man, nor *Eve* the firſt Woman, only the firſt of the Holy Race, and this divers of the *Jews* believe: for in the firſt Chapter of *Geneſis*, ver. 27. It is ſaid — *So God created man in his own Image, in the Image of God created he him: male and female created he them.* Bidding them *increaſe and multiply, and have dominion over all things*: Which plainly ſhews that Man was then created, and that the other Creation of *Adam* and *Eve* ſpoken of in the ſecond Chapter, *Ver.* 7. and 22. were of the firſt Man and Woman of the Holy Race, and not the firſt Man and Woman

Woman that ever was in the World; for it was a great ſpace of time, and divers great Actions were accompliſh'd betwixt thoſe two Creations: Therefore when it is ſaid —— Gen. 6. 2. *That the ſons of God ſaw the daughters of men that they were fair, and took them for their Wives.* The meaning is, that the Sons of *Adam* of the ſecond Creation, ſaw the Daughters of the Men of the firſt Creation that they were fair, and married them. What *Joſephus* ſpeaks of the *Greeks*, and other Nations, may with the ſame Reaſon be apply'd to *Moſes* and the *Jews*, viz. That all Founders and Eſtabliſhers of new Eſtates, have each of them ſuppos'd in their own behalf, that whoſoever was of theirs, he was the firſt of the World, *Contra Apionem*, lib. 1.

Now however *Joſephus* boaſts ſo much of the Antiquity of his Countrymen the *Jews*, yet he himſelf confeſſes, That he nevertheleſs durſt not preſume to compare the Nation of the *Jews*, with the Antiquity of the moſt ancient and infallible Writings of the *Egyptians*, *Chaldees* and *Phanicians*, who dwell in ſuch Countries as are not ſubject to the Corruption of Air; and have carefully provided, that whatſoever has been done by them, ſhould not ſleep in obſcurity, but be kept in memory, in the publick Writings of the moſt learned Men. *Contra Appionem*, lib. 1.

Which is as if he had ſaid, Foraſmuch as no other Nations but the *Ægyptians*, *Phœnicians* and *Chaldees*, have certain Records of their Original, therefore will I pretend my own Nation of the *Jews* to be ancienter than them, who cannot diſprove me; but becauſe the *Egyptians*, *Phœnicians* and *Chaldees* have more ancient Records of their Country in being, to diſprove me, therefore to prevent being confuted, I think it more convenient to yield to them in Antiquity. And this is the ſecret meaning of what *Joſephus* ſays.

I have obſerv'd that no Prophets ever foretold the End of the World ſhould happen till many years after their own deaths, being thereby ſure not to live to ſee themſelves proved Lyars ——

Cur mundi finem propriorem non facis? ut ne
Ante Obitum mendax arguerere? ſapis.
Owen upon *Napier.*

For they who propheſie of the World's deſtruction, are upon ſure grounds, *viz.* that till it comes to paſs, it may be expected.

As Nature cannot create, by making Something out of Nothing; ſo neither can it Annihilate, by turning Something into Nothing: whence it conſequently follows, As there is No Acceſs, ſo there is no Diminution in the Univerſe, no more than in the Alphabet, by the infinite Combination and Tranſpoſition of Letters, or in the Wax by the

the alteration of the Seal ſtamp'd upon it. Now as for the Forms of natural Bodies, no ſooner doth any one abandon the Matter it inform'd, but another ſteps inſtantly into the place thereof; no ſooner hath one acted his part and is retired, but another comes preſently forth upon the Stage, tho' it may be in a different ſhape, and ſo act a different part: So that no Portion of the Matter is, or at any Time can be altogether void and empty, but like *Vertumnus* or *Proteus*, it turns it ſelf into a thouſand ſhapes, and is always ſupply'd and furniſh'd with one Form or another, there being in Nature Nothing but Circulation: *Ne Res ad Nihilum redigantur protinus omnes.* Lucret. *lib.* 2. And to this purpoſe divers of the Poets ſpeak ———

Nec ſic interimit mors res, ut materia
Corpora conſiciat, ſed cætum diſſipat ollis:
Indè aliis aliud conjugit & efficit, omnès
Res ut convertant formas, mutentque colores,
Et capiant Senſus, & puncto Tempore reddant:
Ut noſcas referre eadem primordia rerum.
Lucret. lib. 2.

——— ——— *Mutantur in ævum*
Singula, & inceptum alternat natura tenorem,
Quodque dies antiqua tulit, poſt auferet ipſa.
Pontan. Metamorph. cap. 48.

Nec ſpecies ſua cuiq; manet: rerumq; Novatrix
Ex aliis alias reparat Natura figuras.
Nec perit in tanto quidquam (mihi credite) mundo,

Sed variat faciemque novat: Naſcique vocatur
Incipere eſſe aliud, quàm quod fuit antè: moriq;
Deſinere illud idem: cum ſint hæc forſitan illa,
Hæc Tranſlata illuc, ſummâ tamen omnia conſtant.
Ovid. Metam. 15.

Alſo *Philo* in his Book of the *World's Incorruptibility*, alledgeth to this purpoſe the Verſes of a *Greek* Tragick Poet, and I think of *Euripides*, which the Tranſlator renders thus — .

——— *Genitum Nihil emoritur.*
Sed Tranſpoſitum ultro Citroque
Formam priorem alterat.

Caſaubon likewiſe in his firſt Exercitation againſt *Baronius*, ſheweth from the teſtimony of *Hippocrates*, *Appolonius*, *Seneca*, *Antoninus* the Emperor, and others. *Nihil in rebus Creatis perire, ſed mutari duntaxat.*

But to confirm what *Ocellus* ſaith, we find ſomething like it in the Scriptures, for *Solomon* ſpeaks much to the ſame purpoſe, *Eccleſ.* 1. 4. *One Generation paſſeth away, and another Generation cometh, but the Earth abideth for ever.*

Now as Geographers uſe to place Seas upon that part of the Globe which they know not; ſo Chronologers, who are much of the ſame humour, do generally blot out paſt Ages, which are unknown to them; as the one drown

drown thoſe Countries they cannot deſcribe; ſo do the other with their cruel Pens deſtroy thoſe times, whereof they have no account.

The *Grecians* made three Diviſions of Time; the unknown times: the Heroick or fabulous Times: and the Hiſtorical times, or ſuch as they knew to have been true. The unknown Times were thoſe with them, which paſt from the Beginning of things to the Flood; which Time, whether it had a Beginning, by Computation can never certainly be comprehended, as *Cenſorinus* from *Varro* affirms. The fabulous and Heroick times were thoſe that intervened betwixt the Flood and the firſt Olympiad: buried likewiſe in obſcurity; nor is it certainly known how long *Inachus* was from *Ogyges*, or *Codrus* from *Inachus*. Laſtly, the Hiſtorical and known part of Time is computed from the firſt Olympiad, and treaſur'd up by the *Greek* Hiſtorians. That the *Ægyptians* and *Phenecians* had a conſtant Record of things paſt, is confeſs'd by the very *Greeks* themſelves; who but lately learn'd the uſe of Letters from *Cadmus* the *Phanician*: for which reaſon it has been doubted, whether the *Greeks* had any uſe of Letters in time of the *Trojan* Expedition; as we may find in *Joſephus* againſt *Appion*: That the *Phanicians* had the uſe of Letters long before *Moſes*,

Moſes, and ſpake the ſame Language as the the *Hebrews* did, is clearly proved by *Samuel Petit* in his *Meſcellanea*, as well as by the Learned *Bochart* in his *Phaleg*. For although we know of no Writer at this time extant more ancient than *Moſes* (unleſs it be *Ocellus*) yet few will deny but that there were Writers before him, out of whom he collected much of his own Hiſtory; wherefore ſays Dr. *Brown*, *I believe*, *beſides* Zoroaſter, *there were divers others that wrote before* Moſes. Upon which his *Annotator* quotes a paſſage out of *Apuleius* (in *Apol.*) in theſe words: *Si quod libet modicum emolumentum probaveritis, ego ille ſim Carinondas, vel Damigeron, vel is Moſes, vel Jannes, vel Appollonius, vel ipſe Dardanus, vel quicunque alius poſt Zoroaſtrem & Hoſtanem inter Magos celebratus eſt* — *Diodorus Siculus* was not only famed for his great Learning, but by reading, enquiring, and travelling throughout *Europe*, *Aſia* and *Africa*, for the ſpace of forty years, had furniſh'd his Library with many ancient and exquiſite Volumes. Now he ſpeaking of the *Chaldeans*, relates, that they thought very long ago, that the World according to its own Nature, was eternal, having no beginning, nor that it ſhould have any Corruption, in order to an end, and that mankind was from Eternity, without any beginning of their Geueration: that the

Stars

Stars were eternal: and by long obſervation of thoſe eternal Stars, as alſo an acute knowledge of each of their particular motions, they foretold many future Events. *You will hardly* (ſays he) *believe the Number of years that the Colledge of* Chaldeans *affirm'd they had ſpent in Contemplation of the Univerſe; for before the Expedition of* Alexander *into* Aſia, *they reckon'd four hundred and ſeventy thouſand years, from the time they began to obſerve the Stars.* Likewiſe *Cicero* (who was cotemporary with *Diodorus*,) mentions the very ſame account of Time and Number of years. *Critias*, in *Plato*'s Dialogue call'd *Timæus*, tells us, how an ancient *Egyptian* Prieſt laugh'd at old *Solon* for boaſting of the Primitive acts of the *Athenians*, as of *Phoroneus* and *Niobe* before the Flood, as alſo of *Deucalion* and *Pyrrha* after the Flood; whereas the Prieſt told *Solon*, there had formerly been many more Floods: that he was ignorant even of the moſt famous of his Anceſtors: that he had no knowledge of another *Athens*, the firſt and moſt ancient which ſtood before the Flood, and was deſtroyed by it: that he never heard of the glorious Enterprizes which thoſe firſt *Athenians* had perform'd ten thouſand years before the Flood; at which time an innumerable Company of fierce Warriors had invaded *Egypt* and *Greece*, and all that was againſt *Hercules* Pillars: againſt whom,

whom, the only Valor of the Citizens of old *Athens* was then ſhewn, above all other Nations. Now whether the Prieſt did this to banter poor *Solon*, I ſhall not determine; but the ſame Hiſtory is cited likewiſe in *Arnobius*'s Treatiſe againſt the *Gentiles*, where he uſes theſe words —— *We were the Cauſe* (ſays he) *that Ten thouſand Years ago a great Army of Men came from the* Atlantick *Iſlands, as* Plato *relates, and deſtroy'd a great many Cities.* ——— *Scaliger* (in his Book *de Emend. Temp.*) ſays, *That the* Chineſes *reckon'd the World to have been Eight hundred eightſcore thouſand and ſeventy three Years old*, Anno Domini 1594.

But I ſhall tire you no more with this Subject, which as it does to me, ſo undoubtedly it will to you, and ought to do the ſame to every good Chriſtian, appear a meer Paradox, tho' of as great Antiquity as any thing I ever yet met with in prophane Story. However, notwithſtanding it does not edifie, yet if it may in any kind ſerve to entertain and divert you, 'tis all that is aim'd at by,

SIR,

Your moſt faithful Friend

and Servant,

BLOUNT.

FINIS.